



CAPE BRETON-VICTORIA Regional School Board

PROGRAM & STUDENT SERVICES REPORT FEBRUARY, 2015

Presented to Education Committee March 2, 2015

Susan Kelley, Director

PROGRAMS & STUDENT SERVICES

Celebrations:

Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award

The Nova Scotia Lieutenant Governor's Respectful Citizenship Award recognizes students in grades Primary to 12 who are making a positive difference in their schools, their communities, and their province.

There are few things in the world more powerful or more life-changing than a good deed. This award will recognize students from around the province who are going the extra mile to demonstrate leadership and commitment to creating safe and inclusive spaces in schools and /or communities in Nova Scotia where bullying behavior is not accepted and respectful and responsible relationships are promoted.

Last week three students from CBVRSB were recognized with this award. I would like to recognize these young people and the work that they do in their communities. Congratulations and thank you Matthew, Adam and Joella!

Matthew Bond, Sydney Mines Junior High, North Sydney

Matthew is a Grade 8 student at Sydney Mines Junior High. As the first openly transgender student at his school, Matthew has raised awareness of the issues facing transgendered students with teachers, students and the administration. Matthew has initiated many positive changes that have made his school a safer and more accepting space for trans and LGBTQ youth including taking the lead on the school's first gender neutral bathroom, changing the name of the Gay Straight alliance to be more inclusive and advocating for himself on several occasions. Matthew's strength and courage has inspired the whole school to work towards a more inclusive environment for everyone.

Keep the Promise, Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board

Members: Adam MacLean and Joella MacIsaac

Founding members of the Cape Breton Chapter of the anti-poverty initiative Keep the Promise, Adam MacLean and Joella MacIsaac are Grade Six students at Greenfield Elementary. They returned from a national poverty summit in Ottawa, inspired and determined to end poverty. Adam and Joella organized a number of events such as Coats for Kids, a rally at their school, plans for a summit in the spring for all schools in the CBVRSB, and collections for the local food bank and combined Christmas giving. Through the attention they have gained by local and provincial politicians, organizations, and media, Adam and Joella have ensured the voices of youth have been heard. Their determination, compassion, and leadership skills have inspired others to take up the cause to end child poverty.

I would also like to mention that a teacher from our board, Michelle Finigan, has been chosen by the Department of Education to represent our province at the International Summit on the Teaching Profession 2015 to be held in Banff, Alberta. This summit is by invitation only and will be attended by Ministers of Education, Unions and leaders from around the world. Michelle is an excellent teacher and will represent our board and NS, very well!

PROGRAM SERVICES 7-12

Cathy Viva, Coordinator

Community-Based Learning/Options & Opportunities (O₂)

Rhonda Smith, Consultant

North America Occupational Safety and Health (NAOSH) Week:

The Community-Based Learning Consultant is a member of the Cape Breton NAOSH Week Committee. A very important component of this week is bringing awareness to workplace safety to our junior and senior high students. This year the week is May 3 -9, 2015, and will once again include school presentations, video contest "How do you make Safety a Habit" for the junior and senior high students, and mall displays. The *Safety First Symposium* will take place on May 8 and the O₂, co-op and the skilled trades teachers will be encouraged to participate in the day.

O₂, Co-operative Education and Skilled Trades:

Teachers involved in O₂, co-op and skilled trades are preparing their program presentations for the next school year. This will be the last year that some high schools will travel to the junior highs to talk about their program. Next year with the grade nines being included in the high school they will have an opportunity to see and experience what these programs offer. The Community Based Learning Consultant has begun visits to the schools to assist teachers in this process and to be a part of the school's curriculum information nights.

International Student Program Tammy Sampson and Kevin Linden

The provincial Homestay Recruiting Campaign continues and has been generating some interest. We have received several leads for new families as a direct result of the materials. During the month of January, Cape Breton International Student Program staff attended going-away celebrations for students at schools. Student evaluations for full-year students were submitted to the Nova Scotia International Student Program.

We have accepted and placed one three-month student, April to June. She is from France and will attend Riverview High School. Exit surveys for one-semester students have been collected to be sent to the Nova Scotia International Student Program.

The new Homestay Coordinator for the Glace Bay area, Krista Gillard, has begun her host family campaign and is expected to begin placing students in the first placement round commencing in March.

We have received a short term application for one student who will be with us from April 4 to May 30. If any other short term students or groups become available we will be ready to accommodate them. Success in school and learning language continues to be the focus of our program and the focus for the past month has been on our new students who all seem to be settling in. Our first teacher from the NSEIP program arrived on Saturday, February 14. Her assignment is at Shipyard Elementary.

- The CB-VRSB has agreed to accept five teachers from the new Ecuadorian language and EAL teacher training program to commence in January 2016.

Below is an example of a note one of our Homestay Coordinators received recently:

"It's difficult to explain all my satisfaction and happiness to have met a person like you. I want to thank you for everything you did for me. You were an amazing person to me in these past months. You don't care about your students because it's your job, but because you love them. And that's what makes you a great person. When I was sad, you were there, comforting me and supporting me. Every time I looked into your eyes, I saw hope, I saw someone I could always rely on. I can't forget you. Thanks for everything, I'll miss you a lot, I hope I can see you again someday."

- Eric Therrien, ICT, Learning Resources and Technology Services Consultant, Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, will be visiting the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board to provide further technology training to French Second Language teachers. A proposal submitted to the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development for 50 Chromebooks was approved. Two inservices are tentatively planned for April, at which time Eric will support FSL Teachers in the use of Google Apps in Education.

- The organizational meeting for the Concours d'Art Oratoire (French Public Speaking Competition) was held on February 5, 2015. The Concours allows Canadian Parents for French Nova Scotia to sponsor an activity where students from across the province express themselves and are recognized for their talents in French Public Speaking. This year's local event is scheduled for April 28 and 29 at Brookland Elementary, with the provincial Concours slated for May 9, 2015, at Mount Saint Vincent University.

**English Language Arts Consultant/Literacy Support P-12
(Secondary Report)
Marjorie Bursey, Consultant**

In all English Language Arts consultation work being done within the School Board, attention is always paid to data in terms of school and provincial data. The data is used as a springboard to move forward in best practices for each school and in keeping with each school's needs. Many schools that are striving to improve teacher practice and student achievement have sought consultation on how best to move forward. It is impressive how school teams work together in helping to attain school goals. It is a collective and collaborative process.

Of the many literacy events that happen within the Cape Breton-Victoria Regional School Board, some highlights include having Lesley Crewe as a guest speaker at MacLennan Junior High. She will work with students on a writing workshop help inspire them to continue being writers themselves. Don Aker will also be visiting several schools as he promotes the love of reading and writing.

The language arts consultant and literacy coach continue to meet with and work with teachers in a mentoring/coaching capacity as requested. Work in this regard is always beneficial as it targets teachers' specific needs for improvement. This model of professional development is very worthwhile.

Preparations have started for this year's "Public Speaking" event. With the help of Barry Wilson, ELA Consultant for the DOEECD, Erin Connors, Literacy Coach 7-12 and several teachers, we are planning a "Public Speaking Performance" which will celebrate oral language skills and student lives. Students will have the opportunity to share their "public speaking" in various forms such as spoken word, narrative speech, slam poetry, monologues, dialogues, and formal speech.

RACE RELATIONS, CROSS-CULTURAL UNDERSTANDING AND HUMAN RIGHTS/ASSESSMENT

Lynn Crawford, Coordinator

The first Nova Scotia Heritage Day this year recognized Viola Desmond. As part of celebrations of Heritage Day and African Heritage Month, Student Support Worker Brian Borden in collaboration with several schools had Wanda Robson conduct presentations. Wanda is the sister of Viola Desmond, who tirelessly shares her sister's story. We were also pleased to have Mrs. Robson cut the ribbon to officially open the Black Reflections Art Gallery. She was accompanied by featured artist Malik Headley.

The Annual Black Reflections Art Gallery was a great success again this year. On February 10-12, community members had the pleasure of viewing the lovely artwork of African Nova Scotian students of the Board, and we are pleased to report this year we had the most visitors walk through the gallery. The event was successful due to the collaboration of Student Support Workers, Fine Arts teachers and students. A special thank you is extended to all for helping making this another successful event. Special thank you is extended to the Black Educators Association for providing the snacks each evening.

The RCH Lead Team met several times this month to prepare for RCH Liaison Professional Development day February 19. The feedback from the day was very positive. Nolan Pike was the guest presenter in the morning and walked the RCH Liaisons through the importance of supporting transgender and gender nonconforming students in our Board. This session provided insight and ways the liaisons can assist with site implementation of the recently released provincial Guidelines for Supporting Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Students. The remainder of the session the RCH Liaisons and Student Support Workers focused on understanding terms, climate impact, and upcoming peace day at Greenfield for all elementary schools, and important points to know as RCH liaison. The entire day clearly focused on the importance of having RCH components embedded in school climate, curriculum and supports. RCH Liaisons were encouraged to return to their schools, and establish or rejuvenate their RCH committee.

Currently work is in progress to upgrade the RCH website with new information and resources. The website will be resourceful to staff and community. Many links and lesson plan ideas have been provided by RCH Liaison and covers all aspects of RCH, in all subject areas with cross-curricular lessons as well. It is our hope to have a resourceful site addressing the Minister's recommendation to include the language, history, and culture of Acadians, African Nova Scotians, Gaels and Mi'kmaq, including Treaty Education, in the grades primary to 12 curriculums.

Assessment

The provincial Board Assessment Coordinators Meeting took place on February 12. There was great discussion around the *3 R's: Renew, Refocus, Rebuild - Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education* document. Monica Williams, Executive Director, Learning Excellence, spoke to the

Minister's Action Plan at our meeting. Points she addressed included data will support programming purposes, getting assessment results in the hands of teachers faster and allow on-going monitoring of student progress in early grades as well as how best to identify students early on with appropriate intervention.

There are a few changes for next year's provincial assessments as a result of the action plan. The 2015-2016 schedule is still in draft form and once finalized, I will be shared in my next report. For this spring the grade 8 assessment will only consist of Reading and Math, no writing.

The suggested assessment changes shared raised concern at our meeting because there will no longer be a measure of the achievement gap in early literacy with the elimination of RW3.

Student Support Workers

Dionne Romard

This month I have been working with the Student Support Workers for the Black Reflections Art Gallery. This year we had a great turn-out of students art work and the community was a great support for the three nights. During the three-day event the students saw their art work on display and even met some of their teachers who came out to enjoy the gallery.

The past month I have been training the new Aboriginal Student Support Worker Sheila Ginnish. I have taken her around to schools to meet principals and staff. I have modeled student sessions, trained her in PowerSchool, reviewed SSW guidelines and Board policies.

For African Heritage month I arranged for Sgt. Craig Smith to present to students at Sherwood Park Education Centre. Sgt. Smith currently serves with the RCMP and is the author of *The Journey Continues - An Atlantic Canadian Black Experience* and *"You Had Better Be White by Six a.m."*

Tiffany Perry

This month a lot of my time focused on final preparations for the Black Reflections Art Gallery; collecting artwork, working with some students to complete work, gathering permission slips, meeting with students in preparation of the opening ceremonies, and finally the setting up and working the three evenings of the gallery. The students' artwork was beautiful and essential to the successful event.

I continue to work hard ensuring that all of my students are doing well academically, or getting the help they need to succeed. I have been doing this by meeting with students regularly and keeping in contact with teachers, principals, guidance counselors, resource teachers and parents. This month I have also gone into classrooms to do African Heritage Month presentations and had students assist me with putting up African Heritage Month displays at their schools.

Mi'kmaq Consultant, Marjorie Graves

This month I have been a part of the planning team for the RCH professional development day held on February 19. We had several meetings this month to discuss the best way to meet teachers' concerns/needs regarding RCH issues. For this professional development session, we had Nolan Pyke present to the RCH lead teachers, from each school, on the topic of LGBTQ issues.

I have also been working with Brenda MacIsaac, the MK School Board Literacy Consultant, as well as teachers Ronnie Martin and Rita Gould. Both teachers are at Alison Bernard Memorial High School on a project involving some of their grade ten students doing a number of different cultural presentations for students within our School Board.

I have been working with a grade one/two teacher, Kim MacDonald at Ferrisview School, on ways to incorporate Mi'kmaq Culture into the curriculum. She has done a great job of doing so and is planning an open house for the parents to show all the great topics her class has been learning about.

I also had the opportunity to attend the Google for Education training in Halifax, put on by the Association of Nova Scotia Educational Administrators. This was a very informative session and I look forward to what is in the educational future regarding Google Apps.

STUDENT SERVICES

Cathy Boudreau, Coordinator

During the month of February, the Student Services Department has been compiling information related to student needs with a view to preparing for the school transitions which will occur in the Fall of 2015. This year we will be dealing with increased transitions for students from level to level (elementary to middle school and junior high to senior high) with the grade level configuration change commencing in the Fall.

The special class placement survey has now been completed by schools throughout the School Board. The survey information will be analyzed in coming weeks which will help us to establish student needs for learning centres, learning disability programming and behavior class placements for the Fall.

The Student Services team held transition to school meetings this month with daycare/preschool, All Kids Early Intervention and Autism Intervention Program personnel. The transition to school meetings allow us to learn about children with identified special needs (strengths and challenge areas) who will be starting school in the Fall, to hear about programming supports that have been used successfully with the children and to consider the programming supports that we will need to develop and implement within the school system to support learning. At these meetings, we also consider student transportation needs and whether or not new students may meet the criteria for teacher assistant support. Both the special class placement process and transition to school

process are excellent examples of the importance of collaborative relationships to Student Services so we can determine and address identified student needs.

A joint project was developed this month, between the Coordinators of Human Resources (CUPE) and Student Services to better identify student needs. This short term project will involve completion of Teacher Assistant Schedule Reviews at schools where this has not yet been done this school year (approximately 30 remaining). This process will allow us to determine how student needs are being addressed at the school level and any staff efficiencies that may exist that can be utilized to further support students.

This month, the Coordinators of Facilities Management and Student Services completed an initial tour of school sites to examine Learning Centre classroom spaces to give consideration to space requirements with the grade level reconfiguration. This furthered the collaborative relationship between departments to better serve our students with special needs.

To further enhance the knowledge and skills of Student Services staff with regard to Anxiety in children and adolescents, a professional development session was organized in which Dr. Marion Brown, RSW, through the Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute, facilitated a day-long session with us. Approximately fifty-five student services staff members participated in the professional session (guidance, social workers, schools plus, school psychologists, Board level staff) as well as colleagues from mental health, neighbouring school boards (Eskasoni, CSAP) and the Whitney Pier Girls and Boys Club. As the number of students presenting with anxiety has increased in recent years, staff identified this as a topic for professional development. It was a successful learning day and allowed staff to network and share strategies for working effectively with students.

As directed by Minister Casey, the Student Services Department prepared for and commenced an IPP Review for the School Board. Randomly selected IPPs will be reviewed during the upcoming month and the data from the review will help inform areas to be addressed for improvement across the province.

The core Student Services Team had an opportunity to meet this month to continue to work on a number of initiatives that are in progress, and to commence planning for some other professional learning sessions for Student Services staff at the school level (specifically, learning centre and learning disability staff). We continue to strive to provide meaningful learning opportunities to staff so they can deliver the best programming to their students.

Student Services Consultant, Genevieve Richardson

As part of the Student Services team, the Student Services Consultant continued to provide direct and indirect services to students within CBVRSB during the month of February. We have continued to engage in activities which directly relate to goals outlined in the Board's 2014-15 Business Plan.

Working to prepare our students for the 21st century by providing highly skilled staff and an integrated curriculum, the Student Services Consultant continued to support school improvement

plans by providing ongoing support to schools with their program planning teams by attending meetings and providing guidance and support, by attending transition meetings and providing support to the school teams and by providing onsite TIENET support to some school staff.

To assist in providing a safe, healthy and equitable learning and working environment for all staff and students, the Student Services Consultant along with the Student Services Support Teacher provided support for a number of schools with their teacher assistant schedules.

Ongoing collaboration with outside agencies was completed by the Student Services Department with Pre-School/Daycares, Allkids Early Intervention and Autism Intervention Program where we met and discussed student needs as well as possible programming supports for children with special needs who will be transitioning into our system from home to school. These programming supports will help to ensure a smoother transition for identified children as they transition into our schools for their May primary orientation day and when they begin the school year in the Fall.

Head Psychologist, Maureen Clare MacDonald

During the month of February, our Psychology Team has continued to engage in activities which directly relate to goals outlined in the CBVRSB 2014-15 Business Plan. In striving to prepare our students for the 21st century by providing highly skilled staff, our entire team attended a full-day Workshop on Anxiety, presented through the Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute. Psychologists and Educational Assessors came together with Guidance Counselors, Board Social Workers, Student Services Consultants and representatives from our partner agencies, for this Workshop. The focus was on practical intervention strategies to address the physical, emotional, cognitive and social aspects of anxiety in school-aged children and adolescents.

To further assist in providing a safe, healthy and equitable learning and working environment for all students and staff, our Team reviewed the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development Guidelines for Supporting Transgender and Gender-nonconforming Students. We look forward to the official rollout of these Guidelines.

All team members have continued to work together with Program Planning Teams to support student learning and success. We are involved with placement recommendations/endorsements, consultations, transitioning, assessment and programming for students in our family of schools, as well as students in schools not currently being serviced by a full-time psychologist.

Finally, the growth and development process for designated psychologists continues through the year-long evaluation process, which includes goal-setting, case reviews, observations and follow-up meetings.

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Consultant – Louise Smith

As part of the Student Services team, the ASD Consultant continued to provide direct and indirect services to students within CBVRSB during the month of February. The ASD

Consultant, members of the ASD lead team and teachers that are part of ASD initiative PLCs continued to engage in activities supporting goals outlined in the Board's 2014-15 Business Plan.

Support for implementation of ASD Initiatives throughout the month of February was ongoing. Training related to instructional strategies and program curriculum was completed with identified school staff at the school level in conjunction with school program planning teams. Implementation of the Board's ASD Initiatives continued to support continuous school improvement (CSI) plans by improving school achievement for students identified with special needs, across all grade levels, via implementation of evidence based best practices:

- **TEACCH Program:** Support for development and implementation of structured teaching programming was provided in elementary learning centers (St Joseph Elementary, Glace Bay Elementary, and Riverside Schools). Programming uses physical structure, daily schedules, individual work systems and visual structure to support student understanding and independence related to school routines/expectations and learning.
- **STAR Program:** Support for STAR program implementation at Brookland and Ferrisview Schools was ongoing. Individualized programs have been developed for identified students at each school. Teacher/Teacher Assistant training with respect to specialized instructional strategies was completed via modeling and coaching. Student programs focus on language/communication skills, social skills, academic skills and independence within functional routines at school. School based support/training is building capacity for program development and implementation at the school level. Members of the ASD lead team helped address referrals for STAR program support (Jubilee Elementary, Rankin School of the Narrows, Robin Foote Elementary).
- **PEERS/Social Skills Curriculum:** Support for the implementation of the Board's PEERS curriculum continued at Breton Education Centre. Seven junior high students attended weekly sessions (Wednesdays) which focus on teaching skills to help the teens make and keep friends. Site based training by PEERS lead team members (ASD Consultant/ Behavior Support Teacher) for school based staff via modeling/coaching was ongoing. PEERS programs continued at Glace Bay and Riverview High Schools. Understanding and use of skills taught will help build social competency. Social competency is critical for students to achieve success at school, home, in the community and in the workplace.
- **Cape Breton Works:** Student Work Experience Placements were completed during the month of February. Fourteen High School students from four High Schools (Riverview, Sydney Academy, Breton Education Centre, Glace Bay High) completed the program during the first semester. The Cape Breton Works lead team/teachers will meet in February to evaluate the program, share information/feedback and plan for program implementation during the second semester. Memorial High School will also offer the program during the second semester. The Cape Breton Works lead team will meet with instructors/faculty at NSCC Marconi Campus to discuss/evaluate the program to date. The success of this program is the result of ongoing successful

collaboration among CBVRSB, NSCC Marconi Campus and community based employers. Feedback regarding the program to date has been very positive. As part of a work experience placement at the Cape Breton Post, one of our Glace Bay High Students has written an article for the Cape Breton Community Post ("Living with Autism"- January 28, 2015) and has made a commitment for three additional articles on a once a month basis! There is definitely power in good programming - it is seen in the success of the students.

Through the provision of site based support/training and specialized programs, ASD initiatives continue to assist in providing a safe, healthy and equitable learning and working environment for staff and students.

The ASD Consultant continued to participate in-school based team meetings (IPP/PPT), to problem solve, develop/support programming and document progress for identified students. School/classroom based consultations to support program planning/implementation for identified students, as part of the Board based referral process, was ongoing.

Collaboration among Board based personnel, departments and outside agencies to ensure comprehensive programs for students was ongoing throughout the month of February:

- Continued support/implementation of a Home-School program based at Breton Ability Centre (grade 12 student),
- Program collaboration and program planning team meetings involving Child and Adolescent Services staff,
- Board level transition meetings with early intervention programs (AIP/AllKids) and preschool programs regarding new primary students with identified needs starting school in September, 2015,
- Regular Student Services lead team meetings.

Alisa Cantwell, Behavior Support

As part of the Student Services Team, the Behavior Support Teacher continued to provide direct and indirect services to students within CBVRSB since the last report. The Behavior Support Teacher continued to engage in activities which directly relate to goals outlined in the Board's 2014-15 Business Plan.

Working to prepare students for the 21st century by providing highly skilled staff and an integrated curriculum, the Behavior Support Teacher continued to support school improvement plans by providing direct and indirect services to students, school staff, and parents/guardians with behavior challenges throughout the Board. Since the last report, the Behavior Support Teacher initiated services for seven new referrals at the following schools: St. Joseph Elementary and Mira Road Elementary. Three follow-up consultations/ observations were completed at Robin Foote, Shipyard, and Cape Smokey Schools.

A highlight of the last month was that the Behavior Support Teacher became actively involved in the implementation/instruction of the PEERS program at Breton Education Center. Seven students participate in the program at BEC. Watching these students actively learn the social skills necessary to learn how to make friends is an amazing experience.

In addressing the goal CBVRSB's 2014-15 Business Plan "to assist in providing a safe, healthy and equitable learning and working environment for all staff and students," support for programming was completed by participating in assessment and intervention services. The Behavior Support Teacher participated in PPT meetings, recommending and assisting in developing intervention strategies and supports, and modeling/demonstrating appropriate implementation while explaining the behavior principles to underlying these supports/strategies. PPT meetings for students were held at Robin Foote, St. Joseph, Mira Road, and Cape Smokey Elementary schools.

A productive Student Services meeting was held in early February. The group discussed several topics including Teacher Assistant support, referrals, Program and Student Services reports, and Board priorities.

In addressing the priority "to work with our partner agencies including Justice, Health, Mental Health/Addictions and Community Services..." the Behavior Support Teacher attended a professional development session on Anxiety presented by Dr. Marion Brown from the Crisis and Trauma Resource Institute Inc.

Primary transition meetings with outside agencies (Early Intensive Behavior Intervention, AllKids, and several daycares/preschools) were held in February. These meetings are extremely important in identifying primary students starting school in September 2015 who have special needs. These students may need adaptations to their programming, equipment, or Teacher Assistant support. The information gathered in these meetings assists in developing/implementing the appropriate supports/strategies to facilitate successful transitions into the school system.

PROGRAMS & STUDENT SERVICES, INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT

Rick Simm, Coordinator

Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant - Shane Ryan

As part of the Technology and Student Services team, the Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant continued to provide direct and indirect services to students within CBVRSB during the month of January 2015. The consultant continues to engage in activities which directly relate to goals outlined in the Board's 2014-15 Business Plan.

Working to prepare students for the 21st century by providing highly skilled staff and an integrated curriculum, the Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant met with program planning team members at Malcolm Munroe to provide technical support as it relates to TIENET

functionality and the Program Planning Process. Meetings will be ongoing with other schools each month for the remainder of the school year.

The Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant continued to support school improvement plans by ensuring that assistive technology resources were supplied to students at various schools as a follow-up to technology assessments which are completed on an ongoing basis. Technology resources were provided this month to students at schools such as Rankin School of the Narrows, Riverview, St. Anne's, and Memorial. Providing students with the technology resources they require helps ensure both students and the school as a whole are able to work towards achieving their individual and school learning goals.

The Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant continued to collaborate with other Board-based departments to support programs and services for students through working with staff at Operational Services to ensure that orders for technology devices for students were received by schools and were being accessed by students in a timely fashion.

The Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant continued to work together in collaborative teams to produce programming that supports student learning and success across all contexts within school by communicating with teachers about students' strengths and needs, and completing assistive technology assessments for students referred to the Assistive Technology Consultant. This month assessments were completed at Rankin School of the Narrows, Cusack, St. Anne's, Gowrie, Coxheath, Riverview and Memorial. Assessments will continue to be completed monthly until the end of the school year.

The Assistive Technology/TIENET Consultant continued to work together in collaborative teams to produce programming that supports student learning and success across all contexts by participating in the ANSEA professional development sessions in Halifax on February 12th and 13th. The sessions were focused on the province "Going Google" and there are many implications for this new and exciting initiative as it relates to supporting students with Assistive Technology.

IT PD/SIS Consultant, Karen Campbell

We are supporting student access to a number of technological initiatives by providing them with one username to use across their NSPES email, Google Docs, and the StudentPortal. This unification will make students more likely to manage their username and password, thereby making the technology more accessible and user-friendly.

School scheduling is underway for 2015-16. The change in school configurations requires a new way of thinking about high school schedules. I have been meeting with school scheduling teams individually to discuss the needs of their future students and their school needs. Schedulers gathered as a group at the Staff Development Center this month to hear from two experienced schedulers from Strait Regional School Board. A variety of scheduling scenarios were considered and discussed. The conversations are continuing as scheduling moves forward.

February is a high maintenance time for schools in PowerSchool. I have been helping schools end first semester and begin second semester. P-9 schools are presently finalizing student term 2 report cards. High school reporting was recently completed.

IEI/SIS Consultant, Bradley MacNeil

The availability of our new provincial Google Apps for Education Environment has been a very positive development within the last few weeks. Any stakeholder with a provincially issued email account is now able to access the new system. Students, teachers and administrators will now be able to create, share and collaborate on almost any type of electronic document or presentation. Our students will be able to build a customized set of tools for themselves that may be different than the set of tools their peers and or teacher have chosen to use in their account. It is a managed environment, customized for use in Nova Scotia. It is still early, but so far the response from teachers has been very positive, bordering on excitement for some. We are looking forward to promoting the use of this new tool. It is very user friendly and intuitive for the end user. We hope this will allow us to focus more professional development on specific areas of the curriculum and important topics, such as digital citizenship.

Our technology mentor, Wanda Simm, has been providing professional learning opportunities in the area of technology integration. An actual classroom teacher herself, Wanda has been doing an excellent job in helping teachers at the school site move closer to attaining their classroom or school technology goals.

Soon, each projector computer will have AirServer software installed so that iPad/phones/android devices can be projected in the classroom wirelessly. Initiatives such as this are helping us move forward and will bring teachers and students closer to their vision of a 21st century classroom.

Data Managers, Jim McNeil & Tom Baker

Monthly School Attendance Report – January 2015

Schools	Jan 2015 - Average Absence Percentage
Baddeck Academy	2.09
Boularderie School	4.42
Bras d'Or Elementary	3.60
Breton Education Centre	4.94
Bridgeport School	4.29
Brookland Elementary	2.88
Cabot High School	12.49

Cape Smokey Elementary	8.22
CBVRSB Adult High School	24.64
Coxheath Elementary	6.38
Cusack School	5.33
Donkin-Gowrie Complex	2.91
Dr. T.L. Sullivan Junior High	8.36
Ferrisview Elementary	3.20
Florence Elementary	11.72
George D. Lewis	5.48
Glace Bay Elementary	2.59
Glace Bay High	10.76
Greenfield Elementary	7.25
Harbourside Elementary	3.27
John Bernard Croak V.C. Memorial	8.94
Jubilee Elementary	4.39
MacDonald Elementary	3.99
MacLennan Junior High School	9.28
Malcolm Munroe Memorial Junior High	11.31
Marion Bridge School	3.98
Memorial Composite High School	9.68
Middle River Consolidated	7.77
Mira Road School	2.60
Mount Carmel Elementary	3.87
Mountainview-East Bay Complex	2.82
North Highlands Elementary	9.68
Oceanview Education Centre	12.44
Rankin School of the Narrows	3.52

Riverside Elementary	9.45
Riverview High School	10.73
Robin Foote Elementary	7.96
Seton Elementary	4.21
Sherwood Park Education Centre	17.38
Shipyards Elementary	9.85
St. Agnes Elementary	10.51
St. Anne's Elementary	2.95
St. Joseph Elementary	5.15
Sydney Academy	9.92
Sydney Mines Junior High	12.29
Sydney River Elementary	4.26
Thompson Junior High School	13.12
Tompkins Memorial Elementary	8.08
Whitney Pier Memorial Junior High	13.99
TOTAL ABSENCES	7.52

PROGRAM SERVICES P-6

Cathy MacNeil, Coordinator

**English Language Arts / Literacy Support Consultant P-12, Marjorie Bursey
(Elementary Report)**

In attempt to support schools in planning and achieving their Continuous School Improvement (CSI) goals, I have been working with staff at various elementary schools to continue developing and implementing various strategies. These strategies, some of which include developing rubrics for school-wide writing conventions, promoting school wide writing plans, implementing consistent, effective school wide/classroom literacy practices, all will have an impact on teacher practice and student achievement. All schools and staff who have been directly supported have been extremely receptive to this English Language Arts support and are and ready, willing and eager to work together to work towards achieving a 5% increase in provincial literacy assessments as well as teacher improvement and effectiveness.

The primary common assessments have been collected and analyzed. Primary teachers were asked to report on their students' knowledge about letter recognition, concepts about print, each child's writing stage and their phonemic awareness. The information collected gives the teachers baseline data and information from which to start, continue and drive their instructional practices. This tool also helps teachers track student achievement over time. Current information on achievement of primary students suggests the need to further develop phonemic awareness in terms of the students' ability to work with sounds. The phonemic awareness portion of the assessment focuses on rhyming, segmenting and blending word sounds. Primary students' understanding of print concept is generally strong as is their letter recognition. Most students' writing levels fall within the beginning emergent to early stages of writing which is an appropriate span for their age.

Professional development for upper elementary teachers is continuing to happen with the implementation of the writing continuum and the Nelson Guided Reading kits.

Preparations have started for this year's "Public Speaking" event. With the help of Barry Wilson, ELA Consultant for the Department of Education & Early Childhood Development, Erin Connors, Literacy Coach 7-12 and several teachers, we are planning a "Public Speaking Performance" which will celebrate oral language skills and student lives. Students will have the opportunity to share their "public speaking" in various forms such as spoken word, narrative speech, slam poetry, monologues, dialogues, and formal speech.

Early literacy professional development is on-going with Early Literacy Teacher and Coach, Susan MacDonald. Parent and teacher information about key messages around early literacy has been prepared and will soon be distributed. Early literacy teachers are planning site based professional development for their schools. In doing so, ELT's have been requested to be familiar with their school's CSI literacy goals and have available any resources, activities and articles pertinent to this preparation. As part of their own professional development, ELT's are challenged to reflect on ways they help their students in their literacy development such as building strong reading and writing vocabulary by working with words through word work.

Arts Education Consultant, Lesley Ann Andrews

Some of our staff and students have artwork on display at Cape Breton University as part of the Proletariat exhibit. This exhibit will take place until February 27, 2015.

Grades P-9 music teachers are invited to take part in professional learning on the afternoon of Friday, February 27 at Riverside Elementary. This session will be led by Donna-Lee Parker and focus on the use of technology with the specific use of the Quaver Music program.

Active Healthy Living Consultant, Mary Lou Andrea

The Physical Education Resource Centre:

As students spend more of their free time playing video games and surfing the Internet, physical education classes and physical activity opportunities in schools have become increasingly important for the health and wellbeing of children.

Often, equipment required for a well-rounded physical education program is not available at sites.

The Physical Education Resource Centre at the Staff Development Centre and Florence supports schools with a variety of equipment. For example, at this time of year the snowshoes are in constant demand as well as the hockey helmets for school skating. Physical Education teachers also have an opportunity to request equipment to complement their program as well as introduce new ideas to the students.

Research shows that equipment is a critical component of a quality physical education program. This is twofold: one, for providing tools needed so that the maximum number of students can participate; and two, because equipment can be used to differentiate instruction, increase the levels of students participating and their enjoyment of Physical Education. Teaching a lesson where students can access different size, shape, weight and texture manipulatives also promotes inclusion (some students will have success passing a smaller ball to their partner while others are ready for the challenge of a larger one). When students can experiment with a variety of objects (e.g., a throwing lesson using many different types of balls) they enjoy a richer and more stimulating physical education experience.

Nutrition for Learning, Dietician Debbie Madore

Harbourside Grade 2 Visit: Students in grade 2 at Harbourside received a visit from HEAL Dietetic Interns Kelvin Butler and Lauren Addison. They learned about healthy eating with a focus on reducing the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages. Students had the opportunity to calculate the teaspoons of sugar in some beverages.

Nourish Nova Scotia had their first Program team meeting via conference to discuss upcoming Volunteer month, Nutrition Month and recruitment for Allocation Task Force. Breakfast programs are doing well across the Province. Nourish is the lead for breakfast and our largest partner. Work is underway to make Nourish NS a household name.