



## Update Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education 2015

## The 3 Rs: Renew Refocus Rebuild

# Message from the Minister

As the school year draws to a close, I am pleased to provide you with a copy of *Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education - the 3Rs: Renew, Refocus, Rebuild*, along with an update on the accomplishments to date. Since the Action Plan's release in January, there has been an incredible amount of work completed. Our work to date is due in large part to teachers throughout the school boards who have shared their time and expertise to help us get the work done and done well.

Your assistance is critical if we are to succeed in bringing essential changes to the education system. There are more than 20 Action Plan initiatives planned for September. The initiatives are in response to suggestions from more than 3,000 teachers who participated in the Minister's Panel on Education in the fall. As you will learn in this update, we are well underway to make fundamental changes to the classroom. I was very pleased to attend the two PD days in May where more than 400 elementary school teachers came together to learn about the streamlined curriculum for P to 3 students which will be implemented in September. These were exciting days with a great deal of positive energy. The teachers will take a lead role in training all P to 3 teachers in June. Additional PD is also scheduled for the coming months.

I hope you will find the following update of interest. Best wishes and have a wonderful summer.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Karen Casey'.

Karen Casey  
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development

Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education was introduced January 29. Work to implement the Plan started immediately. Here's what has been accomplished so far:

- ▶ Department staff worked with teachers to streamline the P to 3 curriculum. It was introduced at a provincial launch on May 20 and 21.
- ▶ A new provincial school code of conduct is ready for the fall. Department staff are meeting with principals to review the changes.
- ▶ The use of existing homework guides has been discontinued.
- ▶ An on-line survey to gather feedback on homework standards is underway to help prepare a ministerial policy on homework for P to 12 students.
- ▶ Funding has been allocated for math mentors in grades primary to 3.
- ▶ Our new partnership with Brilliant Labs is designed to provide students with more hands-on learning activities to develop technology skills.
- ▶ The first draft of the new growth and development guide for four year olds is complete.
- ▶ An Early Intervention Support teacher is being allocated to each school board to conduct a pilot in providing direct intervention to Grade 2 and 3 students in mathematics.
- ▶ A Centre for Learning Excellence was introduced in March as part of the department's realignment. It includes student assessment and evaluation, teacher education, student achievement, education research and partnerships, and teacher certification.
- ▶ Student services coordinators and board staff are involved in the IPP review process. It's part of our work to monitor student progress on IPPs through TIENET.
- ▶ The IPP Criteria Action Committee consisting of Department of Education and Early Childhood Development staff and teachers are developing provincial criteria for placing a student on an IPP. They have developed the IPP checklist in TIENET, to ensure that all criteria are met before program planning teams develop an IPP for individual students.

## In addition, work is well underway to

- ▶ Integrate technology and student assessment in new curricula
- ▶ Address the wait list for Early Intervention Programs across the province
- ▶ Administer an Observation Survey of Early Literacy to grade 1 students
- ▶ Add more Discovering Opportunities 9 programs in schools across the province
- ▶ Establish a Minister's Forum for Teaching Excellence
- ▶ Create an Inter-University Chair in Research for the Achievement Gap
- ▶ Establish a Business Education Council
- ▶ Establish a Transition Task Force of Public School Educators, Universities, and the NSCC

## Education is a priority

An additional \$20.4 million was invested as part of the 2015/16 budget to renew, refocus and rebuild the education system including:

- ▶ A new streamlined curriculum for P to 3 students
- ▶ Continuing class-size caps to grades primary to 2
- ▶ Adding class-size caps to grades 3 to 4
- ▶ Enhancing the math strategy across all grades
- ▶ Increasing early literacy support for P to 3 students
- ▶ Opening four new early year centres and four more SchoolsPlus sites
- ▶ Bringing skilled trades programs to three more schools for a total of 16 skilled trade centres
- ▶ Expanding the Options and Opportunities Program to 66 schools

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