

PROGRAMS AND STUDENT SERVICES

Updates on Education, Innovation, Programs and Services

A Monthly E-Newsletter

FEBRUARY 2018
ISSUE 4

Celebrating African Heritage Month



In celebration of African Heritage Month, students in Morgan Gero's Grade 5/6 class at St. Andrew Junior School produced a collection of poems titled "Let Their Stories Ring." The poems were inspired through their research on notable African Nova Scotians. Four poems were shared at the launch of African Heritage Month at St. Francis Xavier University on February 7, 2018, a ceremony sponsored by the African Cultural Awareness Association, African Nova Scotian Affairs, Support 4 Culture, The Town of Antigonish, St FX University and the Strait Regional School Board.



The student African drumming group, under the leadership of Morgan Gero, participated in the launch of African Heritage Month at the monthly meeting of the Strait Regional School Board hosted in the Afrikan Canadian Heritage and Friendship Centre located at Chedabucto Education Centre/Guysborough Academy. This group has been active for several years, originating out of the Black Educators, Cultural and Academic Enrichment Program (CAEP). From there, the group has grown not only in numbers, but also in drums, as the SRSB purchased 12 new drums for the program 2 years ago. The group ranges from Grade 5-12, with students coming from St. Andrew Junior School and Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High School. The group is a place where many of our students grow in their knowledge and pride in their culture and heritage, and develop skills to share that with their school community.

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Excellence in Lifelong Learning

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Supporting Excellence in Teaching and Student Achievement

SRSB Literacy Strategy—Focus this Month:

- Professional learning opportunities in literacy instruction are being planned in response to surveys submitted by Grade P-6 teachers. Based on teacher input, a range of professional learning options will be available throughout second semester and will include job embedded, school-based, and online professional development.

SRSB Mental Health Strategy—Focus this Month:

- Selected staff from all schools are participating in professional development in Promoting Alternate Thinking Strategies (PATHS) , Go-To training and implementation of the mental health component of Healthy Living 9.
- A brochure promoting mental health supports and services has been produced for distribution to staff, students and families. This will be made available to all schools throughout the SRSB through Administrators, Guidance, Go-To Teachers and SchoolsPlus.
- SRSB has partnered with St. F.X. University and Dr. Stan Kutcher to introduce the “Know Before You Go” resource for Grade 12 students at Dr. J.H. Gillis Regional High School and East Antigonish Education Centre/Academy. This resource helps students navigate through situations they will encounter as they transition from high school to post-secondary education or employment, with a focus on maintaining good mental health. A PDF version of this resource is available at teenmentalhealth.org. An online, interactive version is available through the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development at <https://knowbeforeyg.ednet.ns.ca/>.
- In response to topics identified through students at Chedabucto Education Centre/ Guysborough Academy (CEC/GA), SRSB Programs Staff are partnering with the Antigonish Women’s Resource Centre and staff at CEC/GA to develop training materials on consent and sexualized violence. Presentations for Grade 7 & 8 students at CEC/GA are scheduled for this month.

Culturally Responsive Practices Strategy—Focus this Month:

- Cultural Proficiency training has recently been completed at Whycomogah Education Centre. Three remaining schools within the SRSB are scheduled to receive this training this school year: Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/ Academy, St. Mary’s Education Centre/Academy and SAERC.

What’s New in Curriculum and Assessment?

Early Development Instrument (EDI):

The Province of Nova Scotia is conducting the Early Development Instrument (EDI) with all Grade primary students in 2018. The EDI is a questionnaire developed by Dr. Dan Offord and Dr. Magdalena Janus at the Offord Centre for Child Studies at McMaster University. It is a 103-item questionnaire completed by Grade primary teachers in the second half of the school year that measures children’s ability to meet age-appropriate developmental expectations in five general domains: **Physical Health and Well-Being; Social Competence; Emotional Maturity; Language and Cognitive Development; and Communication Skills and General Knowledge.** Teachers of grade primary in the SRSB will be completing the EDI between **Monday, February 13, and Friday, February 23.**

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