Implementing Nova Scotia’s Action Plan for Education is a partnership between the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, teachers, school boards, school administration, universities, colleges, employers, community groups and many others.
Dear Parents and Guardians,

Many exciting changes are coming to the classroom during the 2015–16 school year. It is all part of Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education 2015, The 3 Rs: Renew, Refocus, Rebuild. The Action Plan is in direct response to what we heard from 19,000 teachers, parents, business and community leaders and many others interested in improving public education.

The Action Plan outlines and explains how education will change over the next five years starting in 2015. The improvements will maximize student learning and career readiness and help ensure success for all students regardless of their age and their stage of learning. Improving math, reading and writing skills is a priority. There are concrete actions with timelines that will guide the work and hold us accountable and an annual report to keep you up to date on our overall progress.

The 2015–16 Parent Guide to Nova Scotia's Action Plan for Education will give you an overview of the improvements being made during this school year. The Parent Guide does not include all of the Action Plan initiatives but provides some highlights. I encourage you to take some time to read the Action Plan to learn more about what we are doing, including professional development for teachers, student assessments and evaluation, student development, and teacher education and certification. The Action Plan can be found at www.ednet.ns.ca

I hope you will be encouraged when you read about the extensive improvements coming to renew, refocus and rebuild public education in Nova Scotia.

Sincerely,

Honourable Karen Casey
Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development
There are four pillars of change:

- Build a modern education system
- Create an innovative curriculum
- Promote inclusive school environments
- Advance excellence in teaching and leadership

Here are the highlights of what is new and coming for students in grades primary to 12 for the 2015–16 school year. For a complete list of all the Action Plan initiatives that will be implemented over the next five years, visit www.ednet.ns.ca

**Primary to Grade 12**

A new provincial school code of conduct with clear and concise standards for behavior for all students in all schools across the province

Educational technology and student assessment in the new curriculum

New homework standards to support and enhance student learning at every grade level

The language, history and culture of Acadians, African Nova Scotians, Gaels and Mi’kmaq, including Treaty Education taught to all grades starting this year with students in grade primary to 3. The history of immigration in Nova Scotia will also be included

Monitoring of student progress on Individual Program Plans at the school, school board and provincial levels through the Technology for Improving Education Network (TIENET)

New provincial criteria for placing a student on an Individual Program Plan

Students’ math and literacy skills assessed starting this year with grade primary to 3
New business and entrepreneurship courses aligned with post-secondary programs

A province-wide Achievement Gap initiative to address persistent differences between groups of students in results in math and literacy

A plain language resource for parents to explain the math curriculum at each grade level and key math concepts so that parents can help their children with homework

Provincial guidelines for supporting transgender and gender nonconforming students

Expansion of Schools Plus sites based on identified community needs

A Business-Education Council to help students acquire the skills they need to succeed in the workforce

In addition to the initiatives previously listed for students in all grades, there are specific actions for elementary, junior high and high school students. The highlights for the 2015–16 school year are:

Our two main goals are:

• To improve student outcomes in math and literacy
• To help students become more career-ready
We are making changes for students and teachers at every grade level:

- Birth to Pre-school: *Ready to Learn*
- Grade Primary to 3: *Strong Foundations*
- Grades 4–8: *Innovation and Exploration*
- Grades 9–12: *Ready to Launch*

**Elementary**

Pilot programs in every school board for early math intervention focused at the grade 2 level

Streamlined curriculum for students in grades primary to 3 with a stronger focus on teaching foundational skills in math and literacy

*Reading Recovery* support for grade 1 students in over 100 elementary schools

Early assessment of grade 1 students’ reading skills to help identify their level of reading

Math mentors in all school boards to support teachers with their classroom math programs

Increased time for teaching math and literacy, as follows:

- Grade primary to 2 additional daily time for literacy: 33 minutes
- Grade primary to 2 French immersion additional daily time for literacy: 33 minutes
- Grade primary to 2 additional daily time for math: 30 minutes
- Grade 3 additional daily time for literacy: 43 minutes
- Grade 3 additional daily time for math: 30 minutes
- Grade 3 French immersion additional daily time for literacy, including English: 43 minutes

Class caps for grades primary to four
Junior High

More Intensive Core French programs in grade 6 that use interactive and conversational teaching methods

Math mentors in all school boards to support teachers with their classroom math programs

High School

Expand community-based learning programs for high school students, including Discovering Opportunities 9, Co-op Education, Entrepreneurship, O₂ and Skilled Trades

Introduce two new school-to-community transition programs per school board to help graduating high school students with special needs transition to the workforce and community

Establish a Transition Task Force of public school educators, universities and the Nova Scotia Community College to make recommendations to the Minister of Education and Early Childhood Development by March 2016 about successful transition to post-secondary education, including academic and social readiness and career choices and pathways

For ongoing updates on the Action Plan, follow the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development on Twitter @nseducation
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