

June 05, 2025

ST. AGNES JUNIOR HIGH PRINCIPAL'S REPORT

June is PRIDE Month:



- The **GSA** is holding their second annual craft sale on Monday June 9th. Last year, the GSA raised over \$300 which was donated to the Transformation Closet. This year, we will be donating all proceeds to the Youth Project.
- The **GSA** has made a lot of progress on our Pride Mural. Thanks to Skyler (our CYCP) and Max (grade 9 student) for leading this project and encouraging positive community connections with this piece.

ARTASTIC Projects:



We are proud to share the success of a meaningful art project that took place at our school in collaboration with Indigenous arts specialist Colin Briggs from Halifax Regional Arts. This initiative brought Indigenous storytelling and creativity into our learning environment through a hands-on artistic experience.

Students had the opportunity to design and contribute to a wood-burned artwork on a wooden bench, inspired by the story and symbolism of the dreamcatcher—a powerful and sacred element in many Indigenous cultures. Guided by Mr. Briggs, students explored the cultural significance of the dreamcatcher and translated that understanding into a beautiful, collaborative design.

The completed bench now stands as a lasting piece of functional art within our school. It represents not only the students' artistic efforts but also a deeper connection to Indigenous traditions and values such as protection, unity, and respect.

This project was a meaningful step in our ongoing journey to honour Indigenous voices and integrate culturally responsive learning into our school community.

Art Club Collaboration with the MacPhee Centre

This year, the Art Club had the wonderful opportunity to partner with the MacPhee Centre for Creative Learning. Artist Mahnaz joined us biweekly, leading a variety of engaging and hands-on art activities that quickly became a highlight for students.

From rock painting and tie-dye to macramé and more, each session sparked creativity and excitement. The program culminated on June 2nd with a special summer-themed project where students designed and decorated their own cotton beach bags to take home.

Mahnaz's visits were always eagerly anticipated, and her warm, inspiring presence helped foster a love for art in our club members. We're so grateful for this enriching partnership!

Glass Bead Necklaces Using Kente Colour Symbolism

On Friday June 6th, Grade 9 students of African descent begin a special project that connects culture, creativity, and self-reflection through the creation of glass bead necklaces inspired by the powerful symbolism of Kente colours.

Kente cloth is celebrated not only for its intricate patterns but also for the meaningful colours it features. Each colour holds deep significance — for example, gold symbolizes wealth and royalty, green stands for growth and renewal, blue represents peace and harmony, red conveys strength and sacrifice, and black signifies unity and spiritual maturity.

In this project, students will select glass beads in colours that resonate with their personal experiences and aspirations. By choosing colours thoughtfully, they will craft necklaces that visually narrate their own learning journey so far highlighting their strengths, challenges, hopes, and the cultural values that inspire them to grow.

This hands-on activity encourages students to connect with their heritage while expressing their unique stories. It also fosters a deeper understanding of how cultural symbols can reflect and shape identity and resilience.

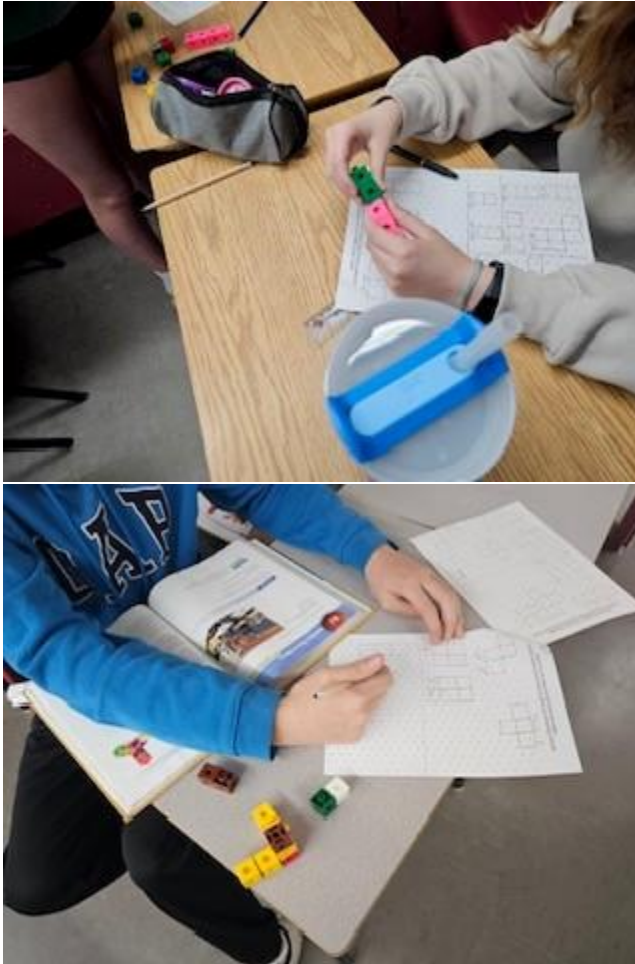
We are excited to see how this creative exploration of Kente color symbolism empowers our students to celebrate their roots and look confidently toward their future.

Classroom Events:

- **Skills Canada** recently presented to our Grade 9 classes on the *9 Skills for Success*, which are essential for thriving in today's fast-paced, ever-changing world. These skills are crucial for securing a job, advancing in your career, and contributing to your community. The presentation included a hands-on activity where students were tasked with building a model without seeing the blueprint, relying only on the guidance of their manager. This activity engaged all nine skills—communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and more—demonstrating their practical application in real-world situations.
- As part of the **Grade 9 short fiction** unit, grade 9 students were excited to welcome author **Andre Fenton** to speak with our classes. His visit offered students a valuable look into the

writing process, especially how he creates authentic and engaging characters. It was an opportunity for students to connect what we're learning in class to the real-world experience of a working author. This session was made possible by a grant provided by the Writers Federation of Nova Scotia and tied in nicely with our CRP work.

- Ms. Mothana's last grade 8 math unit after the RWM8 - Sketching the 3D rectangle prisms on isometric dot paper.



- Gordon Hamilton will be coming in on June 9th and 10th to do math puzzles with grades 7 and 8

SAC Grant Requests

- See handout

Student Success Planning:

We have completed cycle three and our teams are currently working on their cycle three reflections. Some highlights from this year include:

- **Literacy:** Explicitly teaching and reinforcing nonfiction reading strategies—particularly how to find the main idea and text structures —proved highly effective, as students were able to transfer these skills to their reading of media texts, resulting in improved comprehension.
- **Math:** Emphasis on extracting/identifying critical information from word problems has allowed students to develop more efficient problem-solving strategies
- **Wellness:** The gains for some students are tremendously important. Students who historically have been the victims of bullying reported that having a spotlight put on this issue consistently since October was empowering for them. They also report that it has become clear this initiative was not a flash in the pan and appreciate the on-going workshops and surveys.

Guidance:

- Catapult Camp — We have heard in early May that we have another successful St. Agnes applicant! Kaydien Mootry has been selected as one of 55 campers from across the province to attend this amazing leadership camp at Acadia University in late August
- Our Techsploration team had an awesome experience in early May at NSCC Truro campus for this year's conference. One of our students – Max Sulewski – received an art award, and all the students found the experience to be very valuable.



- Rhonda and Skyler completed their final round of “We’re Not That Kind of School” workshops to every homeroom. We shared the results of the data collected from the students over the school year, and received very insightful information from each homeroom about what they’d like to see as our next steps with this initiative.

- Citadel High's O2 (Options & Opportunities) program has made their selection for next year. Of our 22 applicants, nine have been awarded placement into the program and one more is on a waitlist. Considering over 75 students from 5 feeder schools were vying for 20 seats, our students had great success. The feedback we received about our students' applications and interviews was glowing!
- Grade 6 Orientation will take place on Monday, June 9th. The Gr. 9 students on Student Council are taking the lead in running the visit: they will greet the students as they arrive, conduct the tours of the school, organize and run the activities in the gym, lead the information session in the library, and hand out freebies as all the grade 6 students leave the building. It is so exciting to see this level of participation from our senior students with our incoming grade 7s.
- This is my last SAC Counsellor's Update! It's been a pleasure to be part of the SAC for the past 4 years. I am delighted to announce that Stephanie Hughes will be coming in as the School Counsellor in September. She is going to be a wonderful addition to the team here at St. Agnes, and she is already well known and loved by many of the staff who had the chance to work with her for 4 months last year when she was here for her master's in counselling Practicum. She brings a wealth of knowledge to this work from her years as a teacher and an administrator and has transitioned into her role as a School Counsellor with ease.

Sports and Clubs:

Our Track & Field season at St. Agnes was a huge success. 78 students competed in events this year. Athletes spent a month practicing and preparing for our City District meet where they represented incredibly with 27 athletes, including 5 relay teams, advancing to our capital regional championships and coming home with two banners in the junior category. From there, our perseverance showed with hard fought finishes from a challenging meet. Our Jr. Girls claimed a capital title and our Jr. Boys fought for a relay team and one individual to advance to provincials.

At the SSNS Provincial Championships in Bridgetown our Gators got off to a hot hurdling start thanks to excellent finishes from Goodness Olugu and Sam Terrio. (5th & 6th) Linden Todd flashed in the Jr. Boys hurdles and was the champion of Nova Scotia. The Gators were not done there on day 1. Emma Laycock dominated the Jr. Girls 1500m and was joined in the 400m final by Sam Terrio, who was also 3rd in the Jr. Girls Triple Jump. On day two Sam Terrio continued her campaign with a 4th place finish in the 200m and Emma Laycock was crowned champion of the 800 metre and 3000 metre races. Finally, our Gator relay teams dominated day 2, winning 3 out of 4 relay races. Jr. Girls 4x100 and 4x400 and the Jr. Boys 4x100 teams broke away from the field and came away with gold medal performances. Congrats goes out to Olivia Thomson, Goodness Olugu, Sam Terrio, Drew Reynolds, Emma Laycock, Audrey Veinot, Linden Todd, Yael Atienza, Rodwin Ghasemain and Trevon Allison for all their hard work and performances this weekend. All these finishes lead to not one but TWO provincial championships in the Jr. Girls category and Jr. overall!



Male Identifying Softball:

On May 29th, the St. Agnes male-identifying softball team hit the field for the annual junior high tournament, kicking things off with a solid 7–4 win over Oxford. Despite tough losses to Astral Drive and Ellenvale, they finished third in their pool and advanced to the quarterfinals.

Facing Fairview, who finished second in their pool, St. Agnes delivered a dominant 17–7 victory, highlighted by an incredible triple play. Their tournament run ended in a hard-fought semifinal rematch with Astral Drive, but the team left proud, having played with heart, grit, and true sportsmanship.



Female Identifying Flag Football:

The Gators left the swamp this year poised for a run at the banner; the girl's flag footballers flush with savvy veterans at the sport and newcomers alike, all ready for the challenge, May 6th, at the BMO soccer centre. The preliminaries saw the Gators thrash to a 1-1 record, most impressively in a 51-13 win over Caledonia. Grade 8 quarterback Molly Mcgrath starred with a full fist of touchdowns, three of which caught by grade mate Goodness Oluju. In the quarterfinal against Rocky Lake, the Gators found

themselves down 20-0 at halftime, a familiar feeling from the preliminary round where they fell 40-0 to the same squad. Never down and out, the leaders of the team: Ellie Panopalis, Bryn Feeney, and Drew Reynolds, rallied the Gators to a heroic 20 point comeback, only falling short in the final seconds to a miracle play from the rival Leopards. The girls left everything on the field, had a ton of fun, and made memories with friends they will treasure forever.



Male Identifying Flag Football:



In the Works:

- June 12 – Female Identifying Softball Tournament
- June 13 – Talent Show
- June 17 – Awards Ceremony
- June 25 – Grade 9 Breakfast and Rehearsal
- June 26 – Grade 9 Celebration Day

