

SchoolsPlus Expansion Continues

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Minister of Education, Hon. Ramona Jennex

The province is bringing more services for kids and families to more schools with the expansion of SchoolsPlus.

“Increasing services for kids and families in our schools is an important part of the Kids and Learning First education plan,” said Education Minister Ramona Jennex. “This expansion will bring the province closer to its goal of eventually having SchoolsPlus available in every county.”

This week, school boards are invited to apply for one of four SchoolsPlus hub sites to be established for the 2012-13 school year. A hub site is a network centre for SchoolsPlus, that serves a family of schools. The province’s goal is to have 28 SchoolsPlus hub sites across the province by 2017-18.

The province is investing \$2.5 million in SchoolsPlus over the next few years. The successful applications for the new hub sites will receive \$125,000 to provide leadership and community outreach. The site selection is expected to be announced in the spring.

Criteria for the selection process includes:

- demonstrated commitment to using school facilities outside of regular school hours
- potential for collaborative partnerships with community partners and government departments
- gaps in services for children, youth and families that could be addressed through SchoolsPlus
- adequate facility space for community use
- the ability to reach as many schools as possible

“Our son has been involved in SchoolsPlus for the past two years, and it has been a very positive experience,” said Barbie Nunn-Porter, a parent from Chester. “The caring and knowledgeable staff gave us guidance and opened up opportunities for us to consider as our son graduates from high school.

“They searched out appropriate supports both in the school and the community. We are extremely appreciative that our son was able to participate, as he gained valuable confidence and life skills.”

SchoolsPlus staff and community outreach workers consult students, families, teachers and others about their needs. They then bring together professionals and programs tailored to the those needs. A central schoolsPlus site is selected to benefit as many people as possible.

While each school is different, those participating in SchoolsPlus co-ordinate and deliver about 100 services and activities such as:

- March break programs
- anger management
- parenting
- adult literacy and employment support
- homework clubs and mentoring
- arts, leadership, and physical activity programs
- entertainment and hobbies
- summer science camps
- programs designed to meet the needs of boys and girls

For more information about SchoolsPlus, visit: <http://schoolsplus.ednet.ns.ca>.

