

Fall, 2009

Mount Stewart Home and School Association

President: LaVerne MacKinnon

Principal: Mrs. Bernie Lamphier

Name of Project: Welcome to Our School!

Goal(s):

- To welcome, "with open arms", parents and students from St. Teresa School and Tracadie School - two schools that had to close.
- To provide an opportunity for old and new staff members, students and families to get to know each other.
- To inform current and new families about what will be happening during the upcoming year at Mt. Stewart School.

Description:

We had a social with lunch and an information session to discuss what will be covered during the new school year.

Did you achieve your goal?

Yes, we did. We received very positive responses from both parents and children - 90% were more than impressed with our school!

Who did the project benefit?

Everyone! It gave newcomers an opportunity to check out their new school and allowed existing staff and students the opportunity to meet and get to know one another.

What challenges are you still facing with parent engagement?

We hope to have more active Home and School members within our new school community.

Thoughts about the project topic (provided by project partners)

For students, school is their job! All of us have experienced the anxiety that comes when we begin a new job - meeting new people, watching people move smoothly from one task to another because they have worked there for some time. Most of us have gone to jobs where we have been made to feel welcome and also to jobs where we were shown our place of work and left on our own. Many of us remember how insecure we felt in this situation!

For students going to a new school is like that. Mt Stewart Home and School, school staff and students recognized how important it is to make new students feel welcome by having them become part of the school's culture from the start.

Beginnings of any kind often influence attitudes, both positive and negative. A new beginning that includes a sense of belonging and makes people feel welcome will result in a more long-lasting, positive experience for all involved.