

AIMS 3rd annual report card for Atlantic Canada's high schools made headlines around the region.

The following are excerpts from some of the news coverage.

Thursday, March 10, 2005



Which schools make the grade?

Think-tank ranks Nova Scotia's high schools: C.P. Allen tops in metro

In a page 4 story, Cathy Nicoll wrote that study co-author Charles Cirtwill, AIMS vice-president, suggested the ratings are "a little bit worse" than last year. "As the measures get better and more data comes in, we're seeing a little bit of slippage," he said.



Rankin jumps to second in school rankings

In a page one story Nancy King wrote about the performance of high schools in the Cape Breton area. Rankin Memorial in Sydney received an A, which gave it second place in the provincial list. She turned to Charles Cirtwill, AIMS vice president and co-author of the Institute's Annual Report Card on Atlantic Canada's High Schools, for an explanation.

"If you look at Rankin Memorial . . . If you look at their scores, it's fairly consistent the one big improvement is we have a post-secondary achievement score for them now, and it's a fairly solid one compared to everybody else," he said.

**Most N.S. schools
rate C+; Just a
handful of rural,
city highs get top
marks in AIMS' annual report card**



In a front page story, reporter Amy Smith wrote that Nova Scotia Premier John Hamm commented he's disappointed the marks on the AIMS annual report card for Atlantic Canada's high schools weren't better overall in his province.

"If every school doesn't score an A, then obviously there is room for improvement. I think all the report is reaffirming is that we are focusing on an area that needs some focus."

AIMS vice president Charles Cirtwill said the study's aim is to help schools figure out where they should be directing scarce resources.

"We're absolutely thrilled the premier is talking openly about all our schools getting As," he said.



**County's three high
schools receive C+ in
study.**

The AIMS report card made the front page of The Truro Daily News with an article by reporter Jason Malloy about the grades for the Truro – Colchester County high schools. He asked AIMS vice president Charles Cirtwill why the schools consistently fall in the middle of the list of provincial schools.

"They've been solid mid-level performers right at expectations and at the provincial average the last three years. You want to see that kind of consistent performance over time," he said. "We've got a lot of schools that are doing things very well and are having challenges in other areas and when you balance that out we end up with a large group at the C+ provincial average score."

ADHS makes the grade in AIMS report



Reporter Darrell Cole took the story of the AIMS report card to the front page of his newspaper by talking to the principal of Advocate District High School (ADHS) and providing the results for high schools in Cumberland County, Nova Scotia. Cole wrote that AIMS is working to make a difference in the Atlantic region's schools, and quoted AIMS president Brian Lee Crowley.

"We are working to build a model of measurable school success, a model that will help us all work together to provide the best possible education for our children, so they are prepared to compete and succeed in the global economic of their future."



SCHOOLS
GET
PASSING
GRADE

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The St. John's Telegram covered the report card in a page 5 story indicating that most high schools in Newfoundland and Labrador showed an improvement on the previous year. It reported that "AIMS found that 73 per cent of high schools in the province received the same or better grade than last year, with 49 per cent getting a B or better." The report focused on the grades achieved by schools in the province, not on their rankings.

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Kinkora rated best high school on P.E.I. by regional think-tank.

Atlantic Institute for Market Studies says study aimed at helping educators, planners make decision on where to put emphasis.

In a story on page A3, Ron Ryder wrote that the purpose is not just to rank schools, but to provide information on a school's strengths and weaknesses.

Charles Cirtwill, AIMS vice president & co-author of the report card, told Ryder that the provincial government didn't provide much access to the actual in-school marks of students, but the Institute is able to assess school performance by looking at a number of indicators.

"We had a lot of interest from schools themselves and from boards, there hasn't been as much co-operation from the Department of Education," Cirtwill said.

The Journal-Pioneer
THE ISLAND'S HOME NEWSPAPER SINCE 1865

Kinkora rated best high school on P.E.I. by regional think-tank

In a page 3 story, The Journal-Pioneer in Summerside, P.E.I. explained that AIMS has been doing the High School Report Card for three years, and has plans to keep fine-tuning its methods to eventually expand the report so elementary and middle schools are also assessed.

"We want to make sure the public is informed about how schools are doing from the top down," said Charles Cirtwill, AIMS vice president and report co-author.

Cirtwill said AIMS intends for its report to be used not just in ranking schools, but in helping educators and planners make informed decisions about where they are putting their emphasis.