

February News



Dear Families,

As we look ahead to February, we wanted to share what's been happening at school. Our Grade 5 students had an unforgettable experience at Martock during their ski trips in January, building confidence and making great memories on the slopes. In January, staff also engaged in professional development focused on equity and culturally responsive practices (CRP), continuing to strengthen our commitment to inclusivity. Our school well-being initiatives are in full swing as well: the Leadership Group remains active and engaged in supporting positive change, students are regularly recognized for their positive contributions through our monthly Fantastic Moments, and monthly assemblies continue to reinforce our School Matrix and celebrate student achievements.

Lockdown Drill

Lockdown drills are practiced twice per school year. A Lockdown is called when there is an immediate threat inside a school, or very close to a school. During a lockdown, no one enters or exits the building, and all students and staff are concealed in a secure location, away from doors and windows. This is called positioned for safety. Staff will discuss the importance of this procedure with students prior to running a drill. We'll also take time after the drill to remind students that it was only practice and there was no danger. When possible, our police partners join us for Lockdown drills.

Our 2nd Lockdown Drills will be the week of week of February 9.

You can learn more about Hold and Secure and Lockdown Procedures in HRCE schools using the link below.

[Hold and Secure & Lockdown Procedures in HRCE Schools | Halifax Regional Centre for Education](#)

Supporting Reading and Writing at Home for Family Literacy Day

To celebrate Family Literacy Day, here are some fun and easy ways to support reading and writing at home:

For Reading:

- **Talk About the Story:** Ask your child questions about the book. What do they think will happen next? What's their favorite part?



February
Registration Month

February 9
SAC

February 16
Heritage Day: no school

February 24
Thriving Offline: free event (see details in NL)

March 13
Assessment and Eval.
Day: no school

March 16-20
March Break

- **Make Predictions:** Before you start a new book, look at the cover and make guesses about the story together.
- **Read Aloud:** Take turns reading aloud, even if your child is an independent reader. This helps with fluency and expression.
- **Explore Different Genres:** Introduce new types of books—fiction, nonfiction, poetry, comics, etc. to expand their interests.

For Writing:

- **Create a Story Together:** Write a short story or a poem, adding details together as you go.
- **Keep a Journal:** Encourage your child to write a few sentences each day about their day or their thoughts.
- **Write Letters:** Have your child write a letter to a family member or a friend. They can practice their handwriting and share exciting news!
- **Make a Comic Strip:** Let your child create a comic with pictures and short sentences to tell a story.

Reading and writing together not only strengthen these skills but also help foster a lifelong love for books and learning. Let’s make it fun and celebrate literacy every day!

Head Lice Information

How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice:

- Head lice spread through direct contact among children (head-to-head), or indirectly on items such as hats, combs, hairbrushes, headbands, helmets, and toques.
- They can live off the head for up to 3 days.
- Check your child’s head regularly: – once a week as part of your routine
- Teach your child to put their hats and scarves in their coat sleeves or backpacks when they take them off at school.

See attached for more information.

February is African Heritage Month



African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia is a time to recognize and celebrate the rich history, vibrant culture, and lasting contributions of people of African descent in our province. This year’s theme, **“Strength in Unity – Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power and Progress,”** reminds us of the importance of coming together as a community, learning from one another, and moving forward with shared purpose.

In our schools, African Heritage Month provides meaningful opportunities for students to explore African Nova Scotian histories and experiences, deepen their understanding of our shared past, and reflect on the values of respect, inclusion, and belonging. Through classroom learning, discussions, and activities connected to this year’s theme, students are

encouraged to appreciate diversity, build empathy, and recognize the strength that comes from unity. These experiences help foster welcoming school communities and inspire students to contribute positively to a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

February 16 is Heritage Day

Nova Scotia Heritage Day is celebrated on Monday, February 16, and provides an opportunity for students and families to learn more about the people, stories, and events that have shaped our province. Each year, Heritage Day honours a notable Nova Scotian, and in 2026 we recognize Joseph William Comeau, an important Acadian poet, writer, and cultural leader.

Joseph William Comeau is remembered for his contributions to Acadian literature and for helping to preserve and promote Acadian language, identity, and culture in Nova Scotia. His work reflected the everyday lives, resilience, and traditions of Acadian communities, and his legacy continues to influence Acadian culture today.

Heritage Day provides us with an opportunity to explore Nova Scotia's diverse history and to better understand how individuals from different backgrounds have contributed to our shared story. Learning about Joseph William Comeau helps students appreciate the richness of Acadian heritage and the importance of preserving culture, language, and community.

What are Head Lice?

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How to Treat and Control Head Lice

- See attached brochure for steps to treat and control head lice.

February is Registration Month

Do you have or know a child who will be starting Pre Primary or Primary this fall? It's time to register! Registration for the 2026-27 school year begins on Monday, February 2. To ensure we have the right staff and supports in place for September, it's important that we gather enrolment numbers now.

Tip: Before you begin, make sure you have the following documents in electronic form (image, PDF or Word document):

- **Proof of identity/age with one of the following:** birth certificate, passport, immigration papers, or legal adoption papers if you are new to the HRCE
- **Proof of home address with one of the following:** a recently dated official government or utility document with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment, a mortgage contract or a residential lease agreement

Visit the [HRCE website](https://www.hrce.ca) for more information and to enrol your child today through PowerSchool Enrollment!

Don't have a child to register? Maybe you know someone who does! Please help us spread the word and pass this information on to friends, neighbours or relatives who will be looking to register for the fall.



Open your home to an international student!

Have you considered opening your home to an international student? HRCE's International Services welcomes students from all over the world who would like to attend schools in our region. Hosting a student in your home can be an enriching and rewarding experience.

We're looking for warm and caring families like yours to provide them with a home away from home.

Hosting an international student is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that gives your family the opportunity to bring the world home. For students, it's a way to learn about the Canadian way of life.

As a host, your family would be matched with a student who will attend your neighbourhood school and participate in your daily routines.

What you can expect:

- Host families receive a tax-free monthly stipend to help cover hosting expenses (\$825 current, \$875 effective September)

- Students stay for periods of three to 10 months
- Ongoing support is provided by an experienced Homestay Coordinator
- You will learn about and communicate with your student before their arrival

Learn more [here](#) or contact:

HRCE International Services

(902) 464-2000 ext. 2548

hostastudent@hrce.ca

Please share this message with anyone who may be interested.

Thank you! Gracias. Merci. Xie-Xie. Danke. Arigato. Grazie. Obrigado.

Kamsa-Hamnida. Kawp-Kun-Ka. Shukran. Teşekkür Ederim.

HRCE International Services

Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish

Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish, a free community event hosted by Unplugged Canada at St. Margaret’s Bay Elementary, is available both in person and virtually.

Designed for caregivers and educators, this session will explore how early smartphone and social media use impacts children’s development and the latest research, practical strategies, safer alternatives, and age-appropriate boundaries to support healthy childhoods.

Join us! Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish

- Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- St. Margaret’s Bay Elementary - 24 Ridgewood Dr, Head of St Margaret's Bay, NS
- Please register for in-person or virtual [here](#).



Two Truths & AI

Two Truths & AI is a free, interactive activity from Common Sense Education that helps students learn how to tell the difference between real and AI-generated content. Through guided examples, students practice asking good questions and thinking critically about what they see online. This resource can also be a helpful way for parents and caregivers to build their own understanding of AI and media literacy alongside their children. Learn more [here](#).

Planning for Inclement Weather

Did you know? HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the regular operations of schools and school buses in the event of severe or inclement weather.

It is HRCE's goal to communicate any changes to the regular operations of schools and/or buses as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible. **A 6:00 a.m.**

announcement could be:

- All schools are delayed in opening by two hours and bus pickups are delayed by two hours; or
- All schools are open, but some or all busses are not operating for the day; or
- Some schools (either individually or by family) are closed for the day; or
- All schools are closed for the day.

If weather deteriorates, or is forecasted to worsen throughout the morning, **an 11:00 a.m. announcement could be:**

- Bussed students will be picked up two hours earlier than their regular dismissal time; and
- Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour.

How will I find out?

- By email to the addresses in PowerSchool
- By text message, **if you have opted-in**. If you aren't sure if you have opted-in, text Y to the following number: **978338**
- [On the HRCE website](#)
- [On Instagram](#)

It's important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation. Please remember: As a parent or guardian you always have the choice of whether or not to send your child to school.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit hrce.ca/families/cancellations.

Power Outage Information for Families

As we move into the winter months, we want to share how decisions are made when a school experiences a power outage.

Our priority is always to keep schools open safely when possible. A power outage does **not** automatically mean classes are cancelled – even if it happens during the school day. The decision depends on when power is expected to be restored.

Here's what happens:

- When a school loses power, HRCE's Operations Team contacts Nova Scotia Power to gather available details on the cause and an estimated restoration time.
- Once we have this information, we consider:

- **Before school starts:** Have buses begun their routes? If so, we wait until students arrive before making a decision. If classes are cancelled, elementary families will be contacted before dismissal.
- **During the school day:** How close is dismissal? What is the temperature in the building? Does the school rely on power for water or septic systems? These factors, among others, help us decide whether to stay open or close. Often, power returns faster than we could safely send students home.

If classes are cancelled:

- HRCE will notify families by email and text.
- Families of elementary students will also receive a phone call before dismissal.

Deciding to close schools during a power outage is never simple, but safety is always our top priority. We understand that cancellations can be inconvenient, and our goal is to keep students learning in class whenever possible.

More information about school cancellations for any reason can be found [here](#).