



November Newsletter Smokey Drive Elementary School

Phone: 902-864-6838

Safe Arrival Toll Free: 1-833-582-6940

Website: <https://sde.hrce.ca/>

Principal: K. Longard

Vice Principal: C. Garrett

Admin Assistant: L. MacNeil

Principal's Message

Welcome to November! November is always a great time to reflect on how much we've already learned this year and look forward to the next few months. It is also an important time to reflect on peace and freedom as we move towards Remembrance Day. Our school Remembrance Day observance this year will be an in-person assembly for our students and staff on Friday, November 7th.

In this newsletter you will find a lot of important information for our families. We hope you find it useful and informative.

Mrs. Longard

Report Cards and Progress Interviews

Report cards will be sent home electronically by end of day on **Tuesday, December 2nd**. Please follow the steps outlined later in this newsletter to ensure that your most up-to-date email is in PowerSchool. Progress conferences will be held during the afternoon/evening of Thursday, December 4th. There will be no school at all for students on that day as staff will be engaging in professional learning in the morning. More information to follow on this.

Report cards and Progress conferences are not the only way that we communicate student learning and progress through the year, and they are not the only times you can speak with your child's teacher. Communication and collaboration between school and home are essential to student success.

Holiday Concerts and Events

This year's holiday concerts will be in-person events here at school. They will take place on **Wednesday, December 10th, with a storm date of Thursday, December 11th**. More information to follow on start times, tickets, etc.

Remembrance Day

This year to commemorate Remembrance Day, we would like to thank all of the present and past serving members of our community.

Our in-person ceremony will be Friday, November 7th for staff and students. Students are encouraged to wear their Scout, Guide and/or Cadet uniforms if they are members. They could also wear black or red clothing if they choose.

There will be no school for students and staff on Tuesday, November 11th as we all observe this day in our own way.



SAC and PTA

Our SAC (School Advisory Council) meets most months, and all school community members are welcome to attend meetings.

We are currently seeking additional parent/guardian and community members to broaden the voice and perspectives of our school community. You are able to access SAC Minutes posted on our website <https://sde.hrce.ca/>.

Our next SAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 12th from 6:00-7:00 pm. Following that, from 7:00-8:00 pm, we will be having our next PTA meeting. All parents and guardians are welcome to attend.

Water Bottles

It is very important that students bring a water bottle with them each day to school. They are able to fill the bottles during the day but it is helpful if they come to school full.

Code of Conduct Reminders

Students, parents, teachers, support staff, principals, and school boards share responsibility for creating a school-wide approach to maintaining a positive and inclusive school climate where all students are supported to develop healthy relationships, make good choices, and achieve success in their learning. All members of Nova Scotia's school communities have a role to play in the awareness and prevention of unacceptable behaviour. The provincial school code of conduct policy applies to all public schools and school boards in the Province of Nova Scotia. All students and school members in Nova Scotia are required to follow this provincial school code of conduct policy, which is governed by the Education Act.

One of the examples of unacceptable behaviour that we are working on not having here at Smokey Drive is hands-on. We do not want our students to be pushing, pulling, hitting or throwing. We are encouraging them to keep their hands to themselves and to only use them for helping, not hurting. We would appreciate you reviewing this with your child.

If you would like more information on the provincial school code of conduct, please click on the link below.

<https://www.ednet.ns.ca/docs/provincialschoolcodeofconduct.pdf>



Building Access

If you are coming into the school building to drop off or pick up a child, please report to the main office. Family members are not permitted to accompany children to their classrooms. School staff will be happy to escort them if needed and can drop items off.

Weather Appropriate Clothing

Students should come to school each day dressed for the weather conditions. Students go outside multiple times each day and it is important for them to be dressed warmly as the weather gets colder. This includes a warm coat, a hat and gloves or mittens. We will go out in all but extreme conditions. We only stay inside if temperatures reach -20 degrees or lower (with the windchill). It is also a great idea to keep a change of clothes in your child's backpack in case they need them.

Lost and Found Items

Our lost and found items will be displayed for another two weeks to give families a bit more time to come and look for any missing belongings. Any items left at the end of the day on Friday, November 14th, will be donated. We will also be donating any items still left at school after December 19th.



Upcoming Dates

- Nov. 11-- Remembrance Day - no school for students and staff
- Nov. 21--Assessment and Evaluation Day--no school for students
- Dec. 2nd--Report Cards e-mailed home (by end of day)
- Dec.4th--PD and Parent/Guardian-Teacher interviews--no school for students

Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent, please remember to call our Safe Arrival program. Excuse them absent for the day and it will be changed upon their arrival.

1-833-582-6940 (Toll Free)

Reminders

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school
- No pets on school property between 8:15 am-2:30 pm.
- Respect "No Parking" and "No Stopping" signs when dropping off and picking up your students.
- When the bus is stopped on Smokey Drive, please respect the stop sign/flashing lights by not passing.
- There is no parking available for visits to the school during the instructional day.

Safe Dismissal

Please send teachers a note if there is a change to your child's dismissal procedure (ie, someone different is picking your child up, they are going home with a friend, etc.) This allows us to ensure that children are getting safely to their after school place.

Playground Safety and Supervision

Students are not to be arriving at school before 8:15 am without adult supervision and must come directly into the school after the bell at 8:25 am. There is no supervision for students before 8:15 am.

Hungry for something fun? Check out the Nova Scotia school lunch cookbook!

Hungry for something fun? Get cooking with the new cookbook *What's for Lunch? Nova Scotia Recipes to Cook and Enjoy Together*, a joyful collection of most-loved recipes from school food programs.

Proceeds from the sale of this book go directly to supporting school healthy eating programs in Nova Scotia, such as breakfast and snack, cooking clubs and school gardens. Learn more and order yours [here](#).

Whether you're a new cook, a young chef, or a family learning together in the kitchen, *What's for Lunch?* invites you to bake up a handmade pizza, create a picnic plate, make a big batch of breakfast sandwiches, or stir up some butter chicken! Each easy-to-follow recipe comes with tasty ideas for toppings, sides, and simple swaps to make it just right for you and your family.

Within its pages, you will meet some of the inspiring folks behind Nova Scotia's made-from-scratch school lunches, explore where local food ingredients come from, and discover bite-sized fun facts to spark curiosity. Colourful illustrations by students at Oxford School in Halifax and beloved local illustrator Emma FitzGerald bring it all to life!

Supporting Students and Families: Unplugged Canada Resources!

Please note: this includes an event taking place Nov. 2.

Unplugged Canada is a parent-led, national movement advocating for healthier childhoods by delaying smartphones and social media until kids are developmentally ready. Parents and caregivers are invited to explore resources, take the [pledge](#) to delay, and join upcoming parent events at unpluggedcanada.com.

The local Nova Scotia chapter is hosting a free community event for parents, caregivers and educators.

Unplugged Together: Raising Connected Kids in a Digital World

Learn about the latest research on how smartphones are impacting kids, safer alternatives to consider and tools to navigate the digital world with your family.

Hammonds Plains Community Centre (virtual/zoom option available)

Sunday, November 2, 2025

6:30 p.m. - 8 p.m.

Register: <https://UnpluggedTogether.eventbrite.ca>

UPCOMING FREE EVENT!

Unplugged Together:
Raising Connected Kids in a Digital World


Nova Scotia



Learn about the latest research, safer alternatives to consider and tools to navigate the digital world with kids

When: Sunday, November 2nd @ 6:30pm ADT
Where: Hammonds Plains Community Centre
(Virtual Zoom option available)

Register: UnpluggedTogether.eventbrite.ca

Connect with other parents!



AI and your child's learning

HRCE teachers and staff are introducing students to artificial intelligence (AI) in safe and meaningful ways that build awareness, creativity, and critical thinking. Together, we can help our learners understand how to use AI responsibly and confidently in their education and everyday lives. This informational sheet provides you with starting points for conversations about AI and learning.

[Click here](#) to download the document.

PLEASE NOTE: You will need to download and attach the document yourself to your family correspondence. You can not simply copy and paste this link.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

A QUICK GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND
GUARDIANS IN HRCE



WHAT IS AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) means computers that can learn from information and find patterns to help make decisions. AI doesn't think or feel like people—it uses data to make connections that led to informed responses.



HOW IS AI USED IN SCHOOLS?

- Teachers choose if and how AI is used in the classroom.
- Some lessons may include AI tools for learning or creativity.
- Students learn how to use technology safely and responsibly.



HOW AI CAN HELP LEARNING?

AI can:

- Give students quick feedback.
- Help with idea generation when a child is stuck.
- Adjust lessons to fit different learning needs.
- Change reading levels of text so it is more easily accessible.

Remember, teachers will always tell students when they can or cannot use AI for school work.



AI PRIVACY AND SAFETY TIPS:

- Never share personal info with AI tools.
- Only use apps approved by your school or regional centre.
- Look closely at the age restrictions of AI tools.
- Talk with your child about what's real, what's private, and what's fair online.



AT HOME YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Setting screen time limits and tech-free times.
- Talking about what your child does online.
- Reminding your child to check if AI answers make sense.
- Asking teachers about the AI usage guidelines.
- Reviewing classroom/school academic integrity guidelines.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?
Scan the QR code for a list of approved learning tools and information about technology in education.



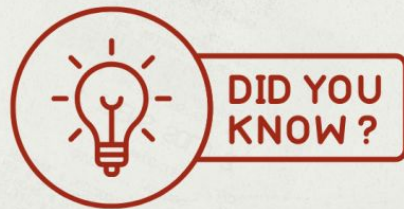
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Learning more about the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

Did you know? [The Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) guides our approach to attendance and is in place to support all students.

The policy states that regular, punctual attendance supports academic success, responsibility, and preparation for the future.

Ensuring regular attendance is a joint effort between students, families and schools. As a parent/guardian, you play an important role by monitoring attendance, communicating with the school when your child is absent, and supporting your child's regular attendance.



Ensuring regular attendance is a joint effort between students, families and schools.

What can you do?

- ✓ Monitor and encourage punctual, consistent attendance
- ✓ Maintain open communication with the school when absences or challenges arise
- ✓ Work with school staff to understand supports or accommodations for your child
- ✓ Be aware of the attendance thresholds and possible consequences



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The relation of primary teeth and mental health conditions: Leveraging Tooth Fairy

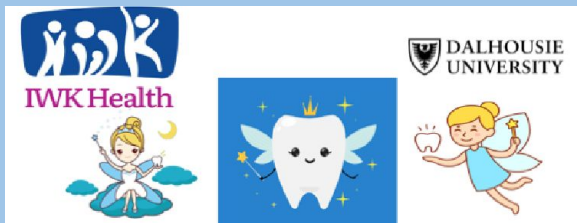
We are clinicians and researchers in the fields of dentistry and mental health. We are conducting a research project investigating the relationship of mental and dental health.

Currently, there is little information about this association. We are exploring how mental health and oral health affect each other, and whether children with or without mental health challenges show differences in primary tooth mineralization. This is a research project, which will let us know how to better help parents deal with their children's dental and mental health.

Participation

Parents will be asked to donate fallen-out or removed primary teeth of their children as well as filling out a checklist. This is a multi-site study, and we hope to recruit at least 400 participants from each group of children, including those without any mental health conditions as well as those with mental or neurodevelopmental conditions (e.g., ASD, ADHD, anxiety).

We anticipate that answering to the questions of checklist will take about 20-25 minutes.



The relation of primary teeth and mental health conditions: Leveraging Tooth Fairy

We are exploring how mental health and oral health affect each other, and whether children with or without mental health challenges show differences in primary tooth mineralization.

To assist with this research, you can provide us with baby teeth that have fallen out or been removed. Interested parents will be asked to fill out a checklist.

You are eligible to participate in this study if your child is:

1. aged 5-17 years old, and
2. has a fallen-out or removed baby tooth that you want to donate.

Participants will be given a gift card.

To join the research project or for more information, contact:

JoinPed@dal.ca

Inclement Weather and School Cancellations

In the event of school cancellation due to inclement weather and other exceptional circumstances, the decision to cancel school is made as close to 6 am as possible. Here are some ways you can find out:

- HRCE Website at www.hrce.ca
- Follow HRCE on Twitter at [Twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS)
- Call the information line at 902-464-4636
- Listen to the radio (all local radio stations)
- Sign up to receive text messages from the HRCE

At times schools may be cancelled by “Family of Schools”. **We are in the Sackville High family of schools.** In the event school is cancelled during the school day, the decision is usually made by 11:00 am. The school will contact all families to confirm procedures to release your children. Please ensure your child knows what to do in case of early closure and ensure that your phone numbers and email addresses are up-to-date so we can contact you. Students are not released until we have made contact with a parent/guardian or designate as you identified when you updated information on PowerSchool in September.

If school is cancelled during the day, we will dismiss students as per their parent/guardian instruction at 12:00. If you can avoid it, do not come to pick your child up early as this will result in congestion in the office area. Parents, guardians and caregivers are requested to wait outside their regular dismissal door at 12:00 for their children.

On days when conditions exist that it is not safe to open schools at the regularly scheduled time but it is predicted that conditions will improve, a 2-hour delayed opening may be considered. In this situation, students at Smokey Drive cannot arrive before 10:15 am and classes will begin at 10:25 am. Lunch and dismissal times will not be affected in this case.