
October is Mi'kmaq
Heritage Month



October Newsletter

Smokey Elementary School

Phone: 902-864-6838 Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

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

Principal: K. Longard
Vice Principal: C. Garrett
Admin Assistant: L. MacNeil

Principal's Message

We had a very successful start to our school year. Students and staff are both excited to be back learning together. We had a busy month of September, including three safety drills (fire, lockdown and hold and secure), Stand Up Against Bullying Day, school photos and our third National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. October, being Mi'kmaw History Month, promises to be another month of important and exciting learning for all.

Thank you in advance for taking the time to review this information. Communication between home and school remains a top priority at Smokey Drive.

Mrs. Longard

Demographic Updates

If you haven't already done so, please take some time to fill out your demographic updates in PowerSchool. Families received an email about this from HRCE and reminders may have come your way as well. Having the most up-to-date information ensures that we are able to contact you as the need arises.

Coming into the school

If you are coming into the school building for any reason, please make sure that you check in at the office. Staff will make sure that students/items are dropped off or collected as needed. Visitors are not permitted to move throughout the school for safety and security reasons.



Outdoor Play

Playing and physical activity is an important part of education. At Smokey Drive, we encourage students to get outside, and play with their peers at multiple times during the day, including recesses, lunch and outdoor learning opportunities. Please ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the weather each day. We go outside unless it is raining very hard or extremely cold. Students cannot stay inside when their class goes out as we do not have supervision for them. You may also wish to tuck a change of clothes in your child's backpack in case they get wet or muddy while playing outside.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

The SAC is a group of parents, staff and community members who act in an advisory capacity to the school principal and Regional Centre of Education on a range of issues related to the school and school system. SACs play an important role in supporting student success at the school community level. We are seeking additional parent/guardian and community members so if you are interested, please contact Mrs. Longard at KLongard@hrce.ca

Our next SAC meeting will be October 22nd at 6:00 pm here at the school. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend.



Up-Coming Dates

- Oct. 13 - Thanksgiving - No school for students
- Oct.22 - SAC/PTA (6:00-8:00pm)
- Oct.23 - Halloween Dance (6:00-8:00 pm)
- Oct. 24 - Conference Day - No school for students
- Oct.29 - Picture Retakes
- Oct. 31 - Halloween

Important Reminder

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school.
This includes items that contain peanut butter (i.e. Reese's Pieces) as well as Nutella (i.e. sandwiches or baked goods).
We have several allergies at our school and we want to do all we can to keep them safe.

**At Smokey Drive
Elementary, we are a
kind and safe school
where everyone
belongs, learns, and
grows together
with respect
everyday.**

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. Also, students are not allowed to be on school grounds before morning staff supervision or after school without their own parent/guardian supervision.

Picture Retakes

Picture retake day is Wednesday, October 29th. If you are requesting a retake or your child was absent on Picture Day, please let their teacher know.

Lost and Found

We have already accumulated quite a few items in our school's lost and found. We keep the table just inside the main doors. If your child is missing anything, please take some time to come have a look. If you could also ensure that your child's clothing comes to school labelled, it would be greatly appreciated.



Traffic Concerns

Please be mindful of the traffic on Smokey Drive as you are picking up or dropping off your children. There are no parking signs as well as a designated area for our buses. It is important that you move slowly through the area and respect staff who are there to protect students.

Parent/Guardian Volunteers

HRCE values the many roles that volunteers play in our schools. We are in need of volunteers for a variety of different events throughout the school year.

In order to be able to volunteer, you must have a current Child Abuse Registry and Criminal Records Checks (with a Vulnerable Sector Check) completed within the last 6 months. We will gladly provide you with a letter to the Halifax Regional Police for a reduced cost for the CRC with VS.

Please click on the following link for more information or contact Ms. Lesley at the school office.

<https://www.hrce.ca/families/volunteering>



Halloween

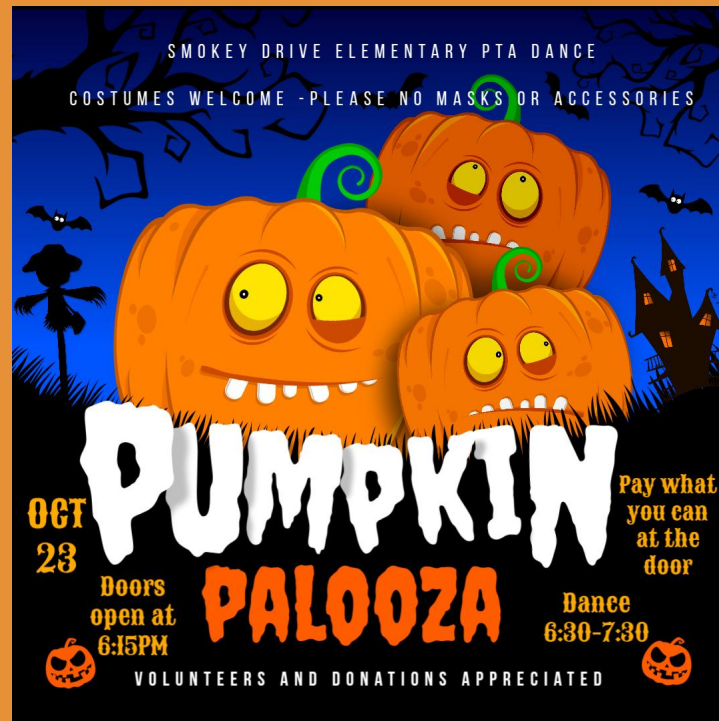
This year, Halloween falls on Friday, October 31st. More detailed information will be sent to families later this month regarding how this will look at Smokey Drive.

Family Dance

On Thursday, October 23rd, the Smokey Drive PTA will be hosting a Halloween Dance for families from 6:30-7:30 pm. Everyone is invited to dress up, but no masks or weapons please.

More information will come in a separate email, however if you are interested in helping out, please click on the link provided below to sign up.

<https://signup.com/go/odjEvbz>



Mi'kmaq Heritage Month

The focus of Mi'kmaq Heritage Month this year is A'tukwemk aq A'tukowinu'k - Storytelling and Storytellers.

This theme celebrates the power of stories in Mi'kma'kik - stories shaped by the land and waters, carried through generations, and alive with laughter, teaching, and truth. Storytelling remains a living record of Mi'kmaq science, history, and values, connecting people to each other and to the ancestors who came before.

If you would like to learn more about it, please visit the link provided below.

<https://mikmaghistorymonth.ca/>



What is SchoolsPlus?

SchoolsPlus is a confidential, free service available in every school in Nova Scotia. Our goal is to build positive relationships between families, schools, and communities. We can help families navigate complicated situations when they are involved with many different services. This helps ensure everyone is communicating clearly and working on shared goals. SchoolsPlus can also help connect families to community resources and offers mental health support in schools. Contact our SchoolsPlus Facilitator, April Peckham (april.peckham@hrce.ca), to make a referral. You can find additional information [here](#).



Connect with us!

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Phone: 902-464-2041
Email: schoolsplus@hrce.ca
Twitter: @HRCESchoolsPlus

Schools Plus
NOVA SCOTIA / NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Bus Evacuation

Even though Smokey Drive Elementary is not a bussed school, we still practice bus safety to prepare students for any potential school trips involving travel by bus. This year's bus evacuation will be taking place later this month. Once a date has been confirmed, it will be communicated to you. Consent forms are not required as the practice will be taking place on school grounds. HRCE bus drivers will review bus safety procedures with staff and students and will practice what to do in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please contact Mrs. Longard at the school.

Food/Cutlery/Water Bottles

Please ensure that you are sending in enough food/snacks with your child to last them throughout the day. It is also important that they come with any/all cutlery needed for those items.

Students also need to bring a full water bottle with them each day. This helps to limit trips to the water fountain during instructional time.

School Lunch Program

If you are having any issues with ordering food for your child, please visit the website: www.NSLunch.ca

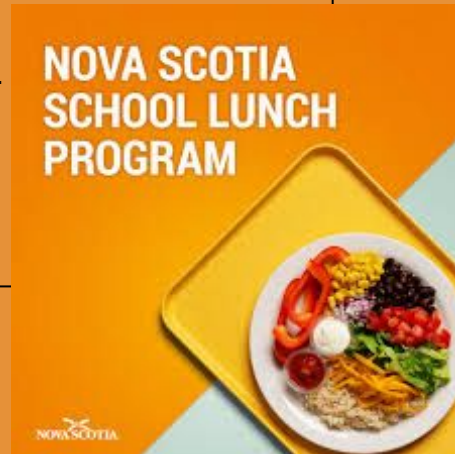
Login Support:

For difficulties logging into or creating your My NS Account, contact the My NS Account Help Desk at 1-844-322-9375.

System Issues: For issues with the ordering system itself, create a support request www.NSLunch.ca.

FAQ & Videos:

Visit www.NSLunch.ca for answers to frequently asked questions and to watch how-to videos.



Introducing Smokey Steve!

We have some creative members of our school community who for the 2nd year in a row, have shared their talents with us. If you haven't already done so, please stop by the planter boxes by the front of the school and take a look at our newest school community member. You are invited to bring your own rocks to add to it if you wish. Please remind your children to look only with their eyes and not with their hands. Let's keep the snake growing!



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 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 have previously identified.

If school is cancelled during the day, we will dismiss students as per their parent/guardian instruction at 11:30 am. If you can avoid it, do not come to pick your child up early as this will result in a number of parents/guardians in close contact. Parents, guardians and caregivers are requested to wait outside their regular dismissal door at 11:30 am for their children. All students who need to wait for a later pick-up will be supervised until they are picked up.

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 cannot arrive before 10:25 and classes will begin at 10:35. Lunch and dismissal times will not be affected.