
December Newsletter

Smokey Drive

Elementary School



Phone: 902-864-6838

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

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

Principal: K. Longard

Vice Principal: C. Garrett

Admin Assistant: L. MacNeil

Upcoming Dates

Dec.2nd - Report cards emailed home by end of day

Dec. 4th - Progress Conferences/Professional Learning
for Staff (No school for students)

Dec. 10th - December Concert

Dec. 19th - Last day of school before the
Holiday Break

Dec. 22nd: Professional Practice Day for Staff

Jan.5th - Classes resume



Principal's Message

It is so hard to believe that it is December already! Our staff and students have been engaged in so much wonderful learning this term. We have an amazing school and are thankful that you are all a part of our school community. On behalf of all of the staff of Smokey Drive Elementary, I would like to wish you all a fantastic holiday season and a very Happy New Year!

Mrs. Longard

December Concert

This year's concert will be a wonderful in-person event here at school. It will take place on **Wednesday, December 10th**. Each class will be participating in a daytime performance as well as an evening one. Please see the schedule provided below.

Tickets for the evening performances will go home on Monday, December 8th. Due to capacity constraints, each family will be receiving two tickets to the appropriate evening concert. No tickets are needed for the daytime performances. Doors open 20 minutes prior to the start time of each concert.

Many thanks to Ms. Britton and the Smokey Drive Team for organizing this event. It's going to be a fun one!



Front Row Seat Raffle

You have an opportunity to win 2 front row tickets to one of the evening performances of Winter Nights and Twinkling Lights! Tickets are \$1.00 each and will be sent home on Monday, December 1st. They are due back Monday, December 8th, with exact change please. A draw will be made on the morning of the concerts and the winners will be contacted by phone. Please let the main office know if you would like any additional raffle tickets. Good luck to all those who enter!



PTA Gift Card Draw

The Smokey Drive Elementary PTA is excited to offer the opportunity to win your Holiday Dinner. The prize will be a \$100 Gift Card to Sobeys for families to purchase the dinner of their choice. Tickets will be sent home on Wednesday, December 3rd with a draw date of Tuesday December 16th. The winner will be contacted to arrange prize pick up. Tickets are \$1 each. Please send in exact change with your tickets and let the office know if you would like any additional ones.



Progress Conferences

Progress Conferences will be taking place on **Thursday, December 4th from 1:00-3:00 pm and from 4:00-6:00 pm**. These conversations to discuss student progress will be in-person meetings here at the school. On the form that was sent home on Wednesday, November 26th, please check off the time frame that works best for you and every effort will be made to accommodate your request. If this date does not work for you, please let your child's teacher know and they will help make other arrangements. If you would like to meet with one of our specialist teachers, please indicate that on the form as well. If you have any questions, please reach out to your child's teacher.



Head Lice

Please ensure that you are checking your child's head frequently for lice. If you find any live lice or nits, students can return to school once they have been treated.

Lost and Found

Please take some time this week during Progress Conferences to have a look at our Lost and Found (located just down the hall from the main office). Any items left there will be donated on Friday, December 5th.

Reminders

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school.
- No dogs on school property between 8:15 am-2:45 pm.
- Respect "No Parking" and "No Stopping" signs when dropping off and picking up your students.
- Do not drive onto school grounds during drop off and dismissal times as this creates an unsafe environment.
- Send a water bottle and any required forks/spoons with your child each day.
- Do not send in food with your child to share with others.

Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent, please remember to call our Safe Arrival program.

Toll Free: 1-833-582-6940

PowerSchoolPortal
SchoolMessenger App

We're ALWAYS hiring!

Did you know that HRCE has more than 10,000 employees serving more than 60,000 students?

Our job postings are updated every Wednesday at noon and feature a wide variety of career opportunities!

As HRCE grows, so does our staff. Check out new opportunities weekly at www.myhrce.ca/jobs.



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December Theme Days

To have some fun this holiday season, staff students (and families), are invited to participate in a number of theme days during the last full week of school in December.

These activities are open to anyone who wants to join in!

- **Mon, Dec 15:** Merry Monday (put on your best festive wear or wear your favourite holiday colours)
- **Tue, Dec 16:** Fun Hair/Headband Day
- **Wed, Dec 17:** Favourite Sweater Day
- **Thu, Dec 18:** Holiday Gear (could be hats, necklaces, etc)
- **Fri, Dec 19:** Hot Chocolate & Cozy PJ Day (hot chocolate and a treat provided by our PTA)

The word "FUN" is written in a playful, bubbly font. The letter 'F' is orange, 'U' is light purple, and 'N' is light pink. Each letter has a thick black outline and a slight 3D effect with a darker shadow on the right side.

SchoolsPlus is here to support you

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.

Parents, guardians and students (12+) can self-refer to SchoolsPlus 12 months a year! Just contact the SchoolsPlus Facilitator at your school.

Call 902-464-2000, ext. 2331 or email schoolsplus@hrce.ca.

Learn more about SchoolsPlus [here](#).



Connect with us!

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.

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

**Schools
Écoles Plus**
NOVA SCOTIA / NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

Resources for Parents from Unplugged Canada

If you're concerned about your kids' screen time, smartphone use, or social media pressure, there are some wonderful resources below to help parents and caregivers navigate the challenges of raising kids in a digital world.

For parents: *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt highlights the research and evidence behind how early smartphone and social media exposure have shaped a generation over the last 10–15 years. *Ten Rules for Raising Kids in a High-Tech World* by Jean Twenge offers practical, actionable guidance to help parents set healthy boundaries and support their kids' digital wellbeing.

For kids: *The Amazing Generation*, written for pre-teens and teens and co-authored by Jonathan Haidt, will be released on December 30. It explains the impact of today's digital environment in an engaging, age-appropriate way.

All of these books are available at your local library or bookstore.

Unplugged Canada is a parent-led, national movement advocating for healthier childhoods by delaying smartphones and social media until kids are more developmentally ready. Join thousands of Canadian families choosing to delay by taking the Unplugged Canada Pledge at unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge.

New educational technology resource for families

We're excited to share a new online resource designed to help families understand how technology supports student learning in HRCE. This page provides an overview of how tools like Chromebooks and Google for Education are used in classrooms, what provincially approved online platforms students may access, and how student privacy is protected. You'll also find information about Nova Scotia's guidance on the provincial cell phone expectations, tips for supporting online safety and digital citizenship at home, and an introduction to how students are learning about artificial intelligence in a thoughtful and responsible way. It also includes answers to common questions about screen time, passwords, communication during the school day, and more.

You can find the webpage [here](#).





Playground Safety and Supervision

Students are not to be arriving at school before 8:15 am, without adult supervision. There is no supervision for students arriving early to play before school and we want to be mindful of that, especially as the weather is turning colder.

Winter Weather

We love to get outside and plan to spend as many recesses and lunches playing outside as we can throughout the winter. We can't wait for the snow to arrive! We take the temperature and wind chill into consideration when deciding to send students outside but we are able to get out most days. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. When students are sent outside, we do not have supervision for students to stay inside. We require students to wear a jacket, boots and snow pants if they are to play in the snow. This helps avoid students having to sit around in wet clothes after playing outside. Students can easily get wet playing in the snow so it's a good idea to tuck a dry set of clothes in the backpack in case your child needs to get changed during the day.





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Will school be cancelled?

HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the normal operations of schools and buses due to weather.

Learn more at
hrce.ca/families/cancellations

In the event of school is cancelled due to inclement weather and other exceptional circumstances, the decision to cancel school is made as close to 6:00 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

Please refer to the next slide for additional information.

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:

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- Follow HRCE on Twitter at [Twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS)
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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 pm. 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/recess and dismissal times will not be affected in this case.