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# March 2026 Newsletter Smokey Drive Elementary School

Phone: 902-864-6838  
Website: <https://sde.hrce.ca/>

Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

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

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## Principal's Message

With the arrival of March, we are looking forward to warming weather, more daylight and spring. As we move a bit further into the second half of the school year, it's amazing to see all the learning going on in classrooms, in the halls, and outside. Students were engaged in a variety of learning activities about African Heritage Month over the past few weeks, and they aren't done learning yet. We are committed to continuing our learning about the histories of all of our peoples. Please take some time to read through the rest of this newsletter as it contains a lot of important information.

Mrs. Longard



## Upcoming Dates

**Mar 13th** - Assessment & Evaluation Day - No Classes for Students

**Mar 16-20th** - March Break - No School

**March 25th** - SAC Meeting @ 6:00pm  
PTA Meeting @ 7:00 pm

**Mar 31st** - Report Cards sent home via email, by end of day.

**Apr 2nd** - Professional Practice Day/Progress Conferences

**Apr 3rd** - Good Friday - No Classes

**Apr 6th** - Easter Monday - No Classes

**Apr 6-10th** - Fire Drill #4

## Reminders

- Do not send any nut or peanut products to school (this includes Nutella).
- No pets on school property between 8:00 am-3:00 pm.
- Respect “No Parking” and “No Stopping” signs when dropping off and picking up your students.
- Please do not enter the school parking lot after 8:00 am as we have many students/families arriving. If you need to drop a student off, please park on the road.
- Check students’ heads periodically for lice.
- Please send enough food for snack time(s).



## Registration for new students 2026-2027

If you have a child eligible for primary or pre-primary next September, please register them as soon as possible. Having registrations done now helps ensure that we have the appropriate staffing in place for September. Please pass this information on to anyone you know who is eligible to register.

<https://www.hrce.ca/families/student-registration-updates>

## Student Assessment and Evaluation

Second term ends on March 12th. Friday, March 13th will be an assessment and evaluation day for staff. There will be no classes for students that day.

Report cards will be sent home on Tuesday, March 31, by the end of the day, via email. Please ensure that the school has your most up to date email addresses.

Progress conferences will take place during the afternoon/evening of Thursday, April 2nd. More information will be coming home on this in the next few weeks.



## Weather Notes

As we have now moved into March, we start looking forward to better weather and longer days. However, it can still get quite cold out. Activity, movement and fresh air help us learn, so we believe it's very important that students get outside to play as much as possible. This means that we go out most days, even when it's cold, snowing or light rain. When classes go out for recess and lunch, all students must accompany their class. Staff and lunch monitors are responsible for the students outside, and there are no extra staff to supervise students who do not go out. Please ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the weather each day. As winter turns into spring, there will be mud and puddles to explore in the school yard. We recommend tucking a change of clothes in your child's backpack in the event they get wet or dirty while playing outside. This will help us to avoid calling you to drop off clean, dry clothes.

### SAC (School Advisory Council)

Our SAC meets most months, and all school community members are welcome to attend those meetings.

We are always seeking additional parent/guardian and community members to broaden the voice and perspectives of our school community.

Our next SAC meeting will be held on **March 25th at 6:00 pm** in our school library.

### PTA (Parent/Guardian Teacher Association)

Our PTA meets most months, and all school parents/guardians are welcome to attend.

We are always seeking additional parent/guardian members to broaden the voice and perspectives of our school community and support future school initiatives..

Our next PTA meeting will be held on **March 25th at 7:00 pm** in our school library, following our SAC meeting.

### Chaperones Needed

A number of our classes are considering possible field trips over the remainder of the school year. To make these trips happen, **we need chaperones** to accompany us. If you have flexibility in your schedule and would be interested in helping us out in this way, please contact the office to obtain the Child Abuse Register Form and Criminal Records Check with Vulnerable Sector letter.

There is a cost to this but don't let that hold you back. Just let us know if this is a concern and we can help. Thank you in advance for your attention to this!

## Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent, please remember to call our Safe Arrival program, instead of calling the main office. Excuse them for the day and if they arrive during the day, the system will be updated upon their arrival. The more notice given about a student's absence, will enable us to prevent the system notifying you.

1-833-582-6940 (Toll Free)



## Lost and Found

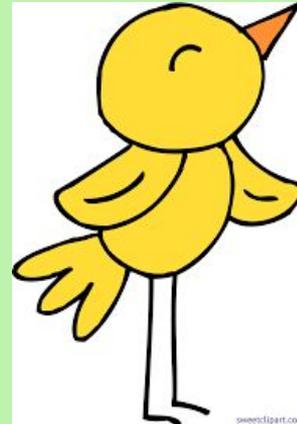
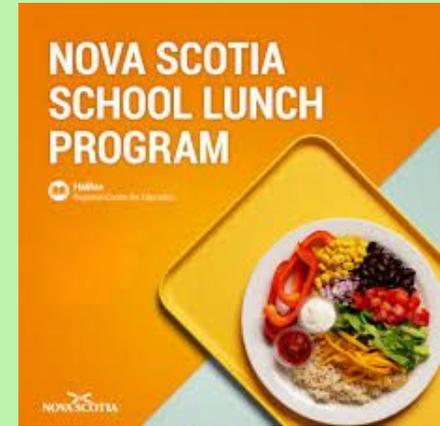
If your child is missing an item, please take the opportunity to have a look through our school's lost and found table, located just inside the main entrance.

Any items left by the end of April will be donated.



## Lunch Orders

A reminder that the next ordering window for lunches opened on February 27th and closes on Wednesday, March 4th for the March 8th-March 21st time frame. If your child wishes to have lunch provided at school, it is important that the orders get put in on time.



## Do you know how to raise a concern?

Did you know that there's a protocol in place to help families contact schools, or HRCE Central Office, when you have concerns about your student's education or well-being?

- All concerns should first be shared with your child's teacher.
- If your concern is not resolved, you should then contact the principal.
- If your concern remains unresolved, you can reach out to [HRCE's Parent Navigators](#) who can provide information about a wide range of supports and resources or connect you with the school supervisor.
- If your matter continues to be unresolved, you can then initiate a formal review process in which the matter will be investigated by the appropriate HRCE Directors.
- The final step is for your concern to be passed on to the Regional Executive Director.

Click here to view the [Parent/Guardian Concern Policy](#).



# March is Nutrition Month: Make the Most of the Nova Scotia School Lunch Program

March is celebrated across Canada as Nutrition Month, a perfect opportunity for families to focus on building healthy eating habits together. Nutrition Month allows us to explore sustainable eating patterns, food literacy, and learning about the benefits of balance and variety in everyday meals. By highlighting the connection between nutrition and long-term health, Nutrition Month empowers everyone to build habits that benefit both individuals and the planet.

Use Nutrition Month as a reminder to take advantage of the [Nova Scotia School Lunch Program](#)! With nutritious, balanced meals prepared daily, the program ensures students have the energy and focus they need to succeed in the classroom and beyond. The School Lunch Program is designed to provide accessible, affordable, and appealing meals that feature a variety of foods from all food groups, following Canada's Food Guide. By participating, families can help their children develop lifelong healthy habits while making mornings a little less hectic.

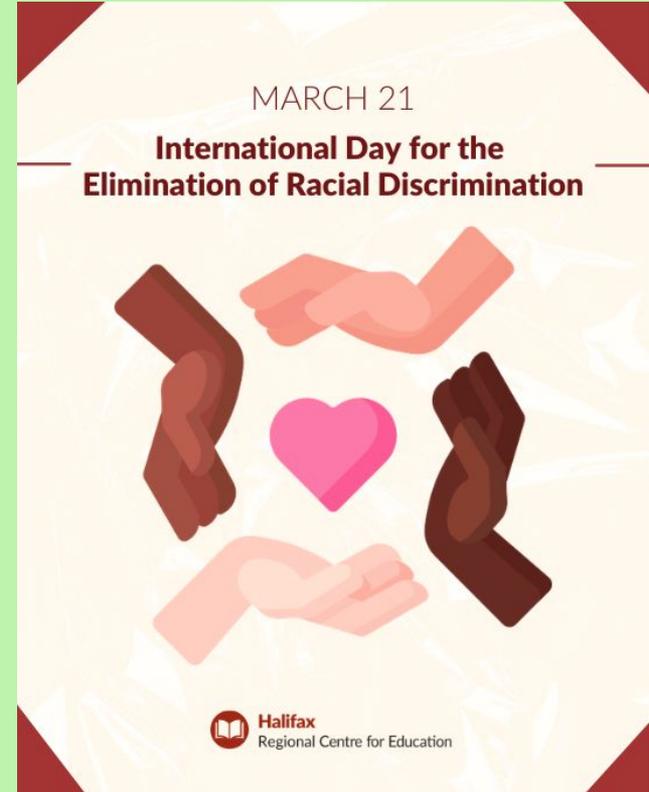
Together, we can make small changes that lead to healthier futures for our families and communities.



# March 21 is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

On this day, we recognize the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to build awareness, empathy, and respect among students of all backgrounds. The United Nations established this day in 1966 to call for a global commitment to ending racial discrimination in all its forms.

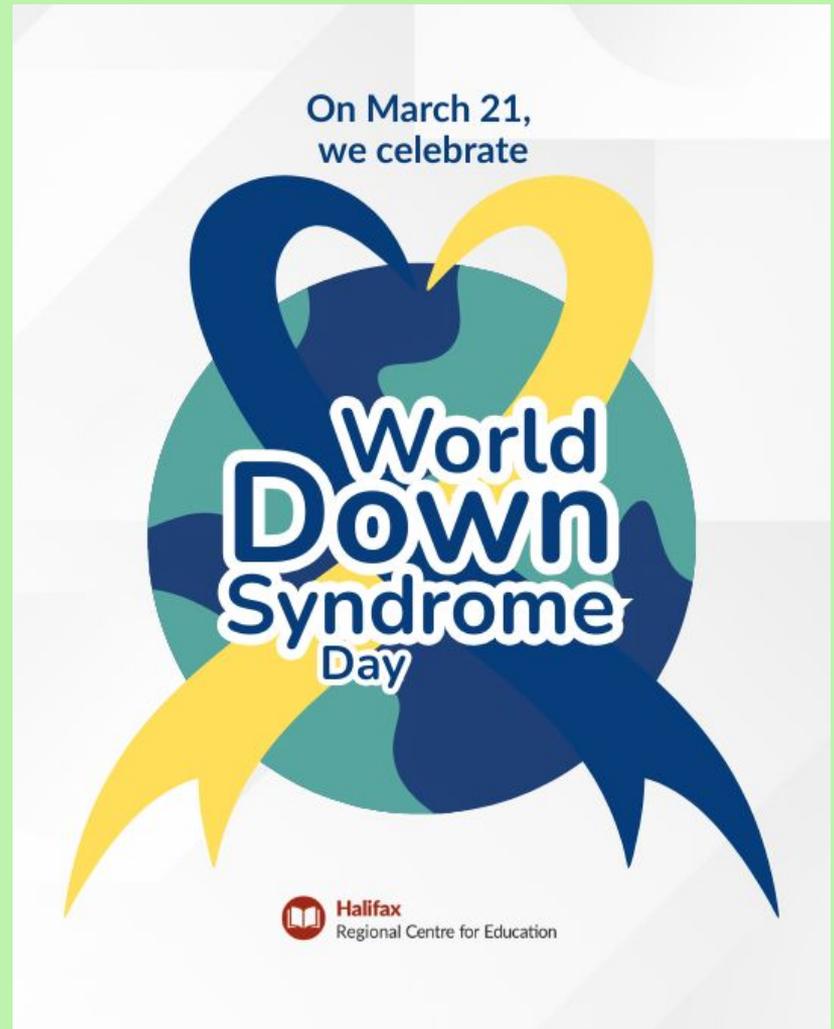
By learning about the impacts of discrimination and celebrating diversity, children gain social skills and knowledge to be inclusive both within school and home community. Families are our students first educators and through your continuous conversation valuing equity and the elimination of racism, we will continue our shared goal of a society where racism no longer exist.



## March 21 is World Down Syndrome Day

World Down Syndrome Day, celebrated each year on March 21, gives us the chance to recognize those with Down syndrome and the awesome contributions they make to our school communities. It's an opportunity for families, students, and staff to strengthen inclusion, acceptance, and belonging. By celebrating differences and promoting understanding, our schools help create welcoming environments where every child feels valued and supported.

On this day, many schools encourage students and staff to wear mismatched socks as a colourful symbol of diversity and solidarity. Activities such as assemblies, classroom discussions, and creative projects highlight the abilities of individuals with Down syndrome, fostering empathy and friendship throughout the school. These efforts ensure that everyone has a voice and a place in our communities, reinforcing the importance of respect and kindness.



# Responding to Technology-Facilitated Harms Among Young People

Unplugged Canada is hosting a free community event at the Canada Games Centre on Thursday March 5 at 7 p.m., available both in person and virtually. Join to learn from Dr. Alexa Dodge, Assistant Professor of Criminology at Saint Mary's University and a leading Canadian researcher on technology-facilitated sexual violence.

This session will explore cyberbullying, the sharing of intimate images, and other online harms youth face, along with research on the support and responses young people need when problems arise online. This presentation will be valuable for any caregiver or adult supporting young people as they navigate the challenges of their digital social lives.

Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 7 p.m.

Canada Games Centre Boardroom - 26 Thomas Raddall Drive, Halifax

Please register for in-person or virtual [here](#).

## Safer Internet Day 2026: Navigating the Internet Safely

As our kids and teens spend more time exploring, creating, and learning online, it's natural to wonder how we can best support them – especially with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence becoming part of their digital world. On Safer Internet Day 2026, Google shared helpful updates and tools designed to make it easier for families to guide, protect, and empower young people as they navigate the Internet safely. Learn more [here](#).



## 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 6:00 am as possible. Here are some ways you can find out:

- HRCE Website at [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca)
- 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 12:05 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 12:05 pm 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.