



April 2026 Newsletter Smokey Drive Elementary School

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

Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

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

Principal's Message

Happy April Smokey Drive Families!

Although the weather hasn't quite come in line yet, we are excited to see what Spring is going to bring this year. We are looking forward to a number of exciting activities and events and all that we are going to learn as we continue on with the final term of the 2025-2026 school year.

As always, your time, consideration and support of our students is very much appreciated.

Mrs. Longard



Upcoming Dates

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

Apr 8th - SAC/PTA (6:00-8:00 pm)

Apr 22nd - PTA Bingo (6:30-7:30 pm)

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

Report cards were sent home on Tuesday, March 31st, via email. If you would like a paper copy of the report card, please let your child's teacher know.

Student-led conferences will take place during the afternoon/evening of Thursday, April 2nd. We look forward to seeing you there!



Weather Notes

As we move further into April, 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 **April 8th 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 **April 8th 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 Program

A reminder that the Nova Scotia School Lunch Program is available for all Smokey Drive Students free of charge. If you have not already set up an ordering profile and wish to, you can visit the link below for more information.

<https://nslunch.ca/>



Water Bottles

Please send your child to school with a full water bottle each day. We are going through quite a number of cups and would like to do our part to help the environment by reducing our waste.

As is recommended with all personal items that come to school, please put your child's name on their water bottle. This really helps us to reconnect lost items with their owners.

April 2 is Autism Awareness Day

Autism Awareness Day is an opportunity to recognize and celebrate the many strengths and experiences of autistic children and youth in our school communities. For families, it's a moment to reflect on the importance of feeling seen, heard, and supported – not just today, but every day.

In our schools, awareness is only the beginning. True inclusion comes from acceptance, understanding, and a commitment to meeting each student where they are. When educators, students, and families work together to build empathy and reduce barriers, we create environments where every child can thrive.

Recognized globally on April 2, World Autism Awareness Day, led by the United Nations, highlights the importance of improving quality of life and upholding the rights of autistic individuals. This year's theme, "Autism and Humanity – Every Life Has Value," reminds us that every person deserves dignity, respect, and the opportunity to thrive, both in school and beyond.





Try Carpool Conversations with your Kids

Looking for an easy way to talk with your child about their digital world? Carpool Conversations from Common Sense Media offers short, engaging prompts and mini podcasts designed to spark family discussions about technology, media use, and online behaviour. Many episodes are only a couple of minutes long, perfect for a car ride or while waiting for practice to start. Explore the conversation starters [here](#).

School Mascot Update

Thank you to all students who submitted their contributions to our school mascot collaboration. Due to there being so many wonderful entries, we are needing to narrow down the parameters for our next step. Classroom teachers have been engaging their students in surveys to determine the animal that will hopefully be our new mascot. We will then invite further collaboration from our school community. Stay tuned!



PTA Bingo Event - April 22, 2026

Chocolate Bar Bingo

Smokey Drive Elementary is excited to host **Chocolate Bar Bingo** on **April 22, 2026, from 6:30-7:30pm!** This fun family event is *first come, first served* due to gym capacity, so please arrive early.

How It Works

We'll be playing **7 rounds of Bingo**. To participate, each player is asked to bring **one chocolate bar per bundle of Bingo cards** (one card for each of the 7 games). Families may “purchase” as many bundles as they like using chocolate bars. All chocolate bars collected will be packaged by PTA volunteers and used as prizes throughout the night.

Family-Friendly Fun

- Coloring sheets and crayons will be available for children during downtime.

Canteen Donations Needed

We will be running a small canteen to help raise funds—similar to past school dances. We welcome donations such as:

- Snacks or items suitable for individual sale (chips, bear paws, fruit snacks, water, peanut free wrapped candy, etc.)

If you're able to contribute or volunteer, please reach out to the PTA. A **volunteer sign-up sheet** will be shared closer to the event. It will be sent out in a separate email and posted on the Smokey Drive Parent Page so families can easily sign up for the role that works best for them.

We can't wait to see our Smokey Drive families for a sweet and exciting evening of Bingo!

Do you know how to raise a concern?

We want families to feel comfortable reaching out when they have questions or concerns about their child's education or well-being. In most cases, concerns can be resolved quickly by connecting directly with school staff.

If you do have a concern, here are the steps to follow:

- Start by speaking with your child's teacher or ECE. They are often best positioned to address questions about your child's learning or classroom experience.
- If the concern isn't resolved, contact the school principal to continue the conversation and work toward a solution.
- If you need additional support, HRCE's Family Navigators are here to help. They can provide guidance and connect families with helpful resources and supports. They can be reached at connect@hrce.ca.
- If the concern still isn't resolved, a formal review process can be requested and the matter will be looked into by the appropriate HRCE Director.
- The final step is for the concern to be reviewed by the Regional Executive Director.

You can learn more about the process [here](#) or by reviewing the [Parent/Guardian Concern Policy](#).

HOW TO RAISE A CONCERN

START WITH YOUR CHILD'S TEACHER OR ECE

START

If your concern is not resolved ...

CONTACT THE SCHOOL'S PRINCIPAL

If your concern is not resolved ...

PARENT NAVIGATORS WILL CONNECT YOU WITH THE SCHOOL SUPERVISOR

If your concern remains unresolved

CONTACT THE REGIONAL EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION

If your concern is not resolved ...

REACH OUT TO HRCE'S PARENT NAVIGATORS TO ACCESS SUPPORTS

- Regional Coordinator of African Canadian Education & Services
- Regional Coordinator of Mi'kmaw Education & Services
- Safe Schools Consultant
- Student Services Facilitator

If your concern is not resolved ...

INITIATE A FORMAL PROCESS

This is when the concern is investigated by the appropriate HRCE Directors



Halifax
Regional Centre for Education

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
- 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.