

# February Newsletter 2026



Upper Musquodoboit Consolidated Elementary

PO BOX 42 ~ 8416 - HWY #224 ~ UPPER MUSQUODOBOIT, NS B0N 2M0

**Principal:** Troy Smith **Vice Principal:** Andrea MacAulay **Administrative Assistant:** Cindy Fleck

## Administration's Message



Dear Families,

February is a busy and exciting month here at school, filled with learning, celebrations, and opportunities to build community!

As the colder weather continues, please remember to send students to school dressed appropriately for the weather each day. Warm coats, hats, gloves, and sturdy footwear help ensure students can safely enjoy outdoors.

This month, our classrooms will be recognizing Black History Month. Students will learn about important leaders, inventors, artists, and changemakers who have helped shape history. Through discussions, and classroom activities, students will explore themes of perseverance, fairness, and community in age-appropriate ways.

As part of our school wellness goal, we are focused on increasing school spirit and community connections. This month, students will participate in a Spirit Week, giving everyone a fun opportunity to show school pride and build a positive school climate. We are also excited to host a STEM Afternoon later in the month, where students will engage in hands-on activities that encourage problem-solving, creativity, and collaboration.

Additionally, we are looking forward to Valentine's Day festivities, which will take place on Friday, February 13th. Classrooms may participate in simple celebrations focused on kindness, friendship, and appreciation for others. Teachers will share any classroom-specific details directly with families.

Thank you for your continued partnership and support. We look forward to a wonderful month of learning and connection!

Warm regards,  
Troy Smith and Andrea MacAulay

## Important Dates:

- February is African Heritage Month
- February is Registration Month
- February 2<sup>nd</sup> - Groundhog Day.
- February 9th-13th: Spirit Week (Details to come).
- February 16: Heritage Day (no classes - all schools)
- February 17: Lunar New Year





# Class Spotlight!



Class Spotlight for this month is Stella in Ms. Webb's class playing glow-in-the-dark badminton with black lights with Mrs. Harnish in Phys. Ed! (Talk about curriculum met and fun had.) Please keep in mind that if you did not complete the consent for publication on your child's demographic form, we cannot post pictures of them.

## New Updated School Lunches Are Coming!

Starting on January 26, the school lunch menu is getting a tasty refresh! Expect more fresh fruit, better side pairings, and some exciting new favourites like chicken fingers, quesadillas, egg roll bowls, and meatloaf! New items vary slightly by menu.

Give the new menu a try! The next ordering window opens on Friday, January 30th



# February is Registration Month

**Do you have or know a child who will be starting Pre Primary or Primary this fall? It's time to register!**

Registration for the 2026-27 school year begins on Monday, February 2. To ensure we have the right staff and supports in place for September, it's important that we gather enrolment numbers now.

Tip: Before you begin, make sure you have the following documents in electronic form (image, PDF or Word document):

- Proof of identity/age with one of the following: birth certificate, passport, immigration papers, or legal adoption papers if you are new to the HRCE
- Proof of home address with one of the following: a recently dated official government or utility document with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment, a mortgage contract or a residential lease agreement

Visit the [HRCE website](http://www.hrce.ca) for more information and to enrol your child today through PowerSchool Enrollment!

Don't have a child to register? Maybe you know someone who does! Please help us spread the word and pass this information on to friends, neighbours or relatives who will be looking to register for the fall.

**Halifax**  
Regional Centre for Education

## February is Registration Month!

Visit [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca) to register today!

**HRCE**  
Regional Centre for Education

Home | Pre-Primary/Primary Registration & Updates

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### Student Registration & Updates

All registration and updates for school are completed through the online portal, PowerSchool Enrollment (PSE) as we are partnered with PowerSchool to ensure the most efficient and secure process for registration updates for your new school year.

Check us here in 2025 as our deadline for Pre-Primary & Primary is still the same as in 2024, and eligible for Pre-Primary in December 2025. To register your child for school, you must complete the registration process by the deadline.

#### What You Need to Register

Make sure you have the following documents available for upload (PDF or Word documents):

- Proof of identity/age with one of the following: birth certificate, passport, immigration papers, or legal adoption papers if you are new to HRCE
- Proof of home address with one of the following: a recently dated official government or utility document with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment, a mortgage contract or a residential lease agreement

Please note: PowerSchool requires a valid email address, a valid phone number, a valid home address, and a valid email address for communication with the school.

Need to know more? Visit [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca) or call us at 902-480-8300.

Website: [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca) | Email: [enrollment@hrce.ca](mailto:enrollment@hrce.ca) | Family Newsletter: [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca)

There are fees for registration completion.

The HRCE is a not-for-profit organization.

For more information:

• Visit [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca) for more information or contact us at 902-480-8300.

# February is African Heritage Month

African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia is a time to recognize and celebrate the rich history, vibrant culture, and lasting contributions of people of African descent in our province.

This year's theme, "**Strength in Unity – Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power and Progress,**" reminds us of the importance of coming together as a community, learning from one another, and moving forward with shared purpose.

In our schools, African Heritage Month provides meaningful opportunities for students to explore African Nova Scotian histories and experiences, deepen their understanding of our shared past, and reflect on the values of respect, inclusion, and belonging. Through classroom learning, discussions, and activities connected to this year's theme, students are encouraged to appreciate diversity, build empathy, and recognize the strength that comes from unity. These experiences help foster welcoming school communities and inspire students to contribute positively to a more inclusive and equitable future for all.



## Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish

Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish, a free community event hosted by Unplugged Canada at St. Margaret's Bay Elementary, is available both in person and virtually.

Designed for caregivers and educators, this session will explore how early smartphone and social media use impacts children's development and the latest research, practical strategies, safer alternatives, and age-appropriate boundaries to support healthy childhoods.

Join us! Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish

- Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- St. Margaret's Bay Elementary - 24 Ridgewood Dr, Head of St Margaret's Bay, NS
- Please register for in-person or virtual [here](#).

### UPCOMING FREE EVENT!

#### Thriving Offline:

How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish



**When:** Tuesday, February 24<sup>th</sup> @ 6:30pm ADT

**Where:** St. Margaret's Bay Elementary, NS

(Virtual Zoom option available)

**Register:** [UnpluggedNSThrivingOffline.eventbrite.ca](https://unpluggedNSThrivingOffline.eventbrite.ca)

*Connect with other parents in our supportive community!*

## February 16 is Heritage Day

Nova Scotia Heritage Day is celebrated on Monday, February 16, and provides an opportunity for students and families to learn more about the people, stories, and events that have shaped our province. Each year, Heritage Day honours a notable Nova Scotian, and in 2026 we recognize Joseph William Comeau, an important Acadian poet, writer, and cultural leader.

Joseph William Comeau is remembered for his contributions to Acadian literature and for helping to preserve and promote Acadian language, identity, and culture in Nova Scotia. His work reflected the everyday lives, resilience, and traditions of Acadian communities, and his legacy continues to influence Acadian culture today.

Heritage Day provides us with an opportunity to explore Nova Scotia's diverse history and to better understand how individuals from different backgrounds have contributed to our shared story. Learning about Joseph William Comeau helps students appreciate the richness of Acadian heritage and the importance of preserving culture, language, and community.

## Two Truths & AI

Two Truths & AI is a free, interactive activity from Common Sense Education that helps students learn how to tell the difference between real and AI-generated content. Through guided examples, students practice asking good questions and thinking critically about what they see online. This resource can also be a helpful way for parents and caregivers to build their own understanding of AI and media literacy alongside their children. [Learn more here.](#)



# Power Outage Information for Families

As we move into the winter months, we want to share how decisions are made when a school experiences a power outage.

Our priority is always to keep schools open safely when possible. A power outage does not automatically mean classes are cancelled – even if it happens during the school day. The decision depends on when power is expected to be restored.

Here's what happens:

- When a school loses power, HRCE's Operations Team contacts Nova Scotia Power to gather available details on the cause and an estimated restoration time.
- Once we have this information, we consider:
- Before school starts: Have buses begun their routes? If so, we wait until students arrive before making a decision. If classes are cancelled, elementary families will be contacted before dismissal.
- During the school day: How close is dismissal? What is the temperature in the building? Does the school rely on power for water or septic systems? These factors, among others, help us decide whether to stay open or close. Often, power returns faster than we could safely send students home.

If classes are cancelled:

- HRCE will notify families by email and text.
- Families of elementary students will also receive a phone call before dismissal.

Deciding to close schools during a power outage is never simple, but safety is always our top priority. We understand that cancellations can be inconvenient, and our goal is to keep students learning in class whenever possible.

More information about school cancellations for any reason can be found [here](#).



# Planning for Inclement Weather

Did you know? HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the regular operations of schools and school buses in the event of severe or inclement weather. It is HRCE's goal to communicate any changes to the regular operations of schools and/or buses as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible. **A 6:00 a.m. announcement could be:**

- All schools are delayed in opening by two hours and bus pickups are delayed by two hours; or
- All schools are open, but some or all busses are not operating for the day; or
- Some schools (either individually or by family) are closed for the day; or
- All schools are closed for the day.

If weather deteriorates, or is forecasted to worsen throughout the morning, **an 11:00 a.m. announcement could be:**

- Bussed students will be picked up two hours earlier than their regular dismissal time; and
- Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour.
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## How will I find out?

- By email to the addresses in PowerSchool
- By text message, if you **have opted-in**. If you aren't sure if you have opted-in, text Y to the following number: **978338**
- On the HRCE website
- On Instagram
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It's important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation. Please remember: As a parent or guardian you always have the choice of whether or not to send your child to school.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit [hrce.ca/families/cancellations](http://hrce.ca/families/cancellations).



**“Learning is the Way to GROW”**

# Open your home to an international student!

Have you considered opening your home to an international student?

HRCE's International Services welcomes students from all over the world who would like to attend schools in our region. Hosting a student in your home can be an enriching and rewarding experience. We're looking for warm and caring families like yours to provide them with a home away from home. Hosting an international student is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that gives your family the opportunity to bring the world home. For students, it's a way to learn about the Canadian way of life. As a host, your family would be matched with a student who will attend your neighbourhood school and participate in your daily routines.

What you can expect:

- Host families receive a tax-free monthly stipend to help cover hosting expenses (\$825 current, \$875 effective September)
- Students stay for periods of three to 10 months
- Ongoing support is provided by an experienced Homestay Coordinator
- You will learn about and communicate with your student before their arrival

Learn more [here](#) or contact:

HRCE International Services

(902) 464-2000 ext. 2548

[hostastudent@hrce.ca](mailto:hostastudent@hrce.ca)

Please share this message with anyone who may be interested.

Thank you! Gracias. Merci. Xie-Xie. Danke. Arigato. Grazie. Obrigado. Kamsa-Hamnida. Kawp-Kun-Ka. Shukran. Teşekkür Ederim.

HRCE International Services



## BECOME A HOST FAMILY

OPEN YOUR HOME AND HEART TO AN INTERNATIONAL STUDENT

**\$875**  
/month

PER STUDENT  
(Tax Free)

**\$975**  
/month

If you can  
accommodate  
a **vegetarian** or  
**lactose free diet**

**\$1075**  
/month

If you can  
accommodate  
a **vegan** or  
**celiac diet**

\* Effective in September 2025.

**RECEIVE \$100 FOR EVERY SUCCESSFUL REFERRAL OF NEW HOST FAMILY**

*Share the name and contact details of an interested host. Once they are approved and actively hosting, you'll receive \$100.*



**Halifax**  
Regional Centre for Education

Learn More:  
[nsisp.ca/host](https://nsisp.ca/host)

Email [hostastudent@hrce.ca](mailto:hostastudent@hrce.ca)  
or call **902-464-2000 ext. 2548**

