

## École Shannon Park School

# NEWSLETTER

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## December 2025

Dear Families,

As we move into December, we are now in Term 2 of the school year, with Progress Conferences taking place this week. If you haven't already, be sure to book a meeting with your child's teachers.

Over the past month, we've enjoyed some wonderful events, including our Remembrance Day ceremony, and our Home and School's Cookies and Crafts event. A big thank you to Mr. Tuck as he helps our students prepare for our Primary-Grade 2/3 Winter Concert next week.

We deeply appreciate the ongoing support and collaboration of the Shannon Park community over the past few months. As the holiday season approaches, we hope it brings you joy and quality time with family and friends.

The new year promises exciting learning opportunities and memorable moments. We look forward to continuing this journey together as a school community. Wishing you all good health and happiness in 2026!

Warm regards,

*Ms. Gourlay and Mme. Hazel*



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## Upcoming Dates: Click [here](#) for HRCE 25-26 Calendar

- December 2: Report Cards sent home via EDUPost
- December 4: Teacher Prof. Practice & Progress Conferences (No School for Students)
- December 11: Winter Concert Grades Primary-2/3 @ 12:30pm
- December 14: First day of Hanukkah
- December 19: Last day of school for students before holiday break
- December 22: Teacher Professional Practice Day (No School for Students)
- December 25: Christmas Day
- December 26: Kwanzaa
- January 5: School Reopens

## December Concert

Shannon Park School will be hosting our December Winter concert Thursday, December 11th. Please arrive early to sign in and be seated in the gym for a 12:30pm start. Due to fire regulations and seating capacity, siblings that are in class during this time are not able to join the audience.

Students from the following classes will be performing:

P Noiles, P Shubaly, P/1 Dick, P/1 McGrath, 1 Anand,  
1 Goodbody, 1/2 Stevens, 2 Wall, 2 Dull, 2 McKay, and 2/3 Clements.

We ask that you wait until the end of the concert before leaving the gym to avoid disruptions to our performers.

If you are picking up your child after the concert, it is preferable for safe dismissal and less crowding to wait for students outside at the regular 2:10pm dismissal time near the Primary Exit by the Bus Dismissal Parking Lot. If you need to take them earlier, please sign them out in the main office and wait for them to be called down to the office.

## Staffing Update

We would like to wish Ms. Alexa Urquhart and Ms. Gabriella Moulton all the best as they wrap up their time at Shannon Park and move on to new schools. Ms. Gabby has been a very helpful teacher since September and we wish her the best of luck at her new

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school. Ms. Alexa has done a wonderful job starting off the year in Grade 4/5 and we now welcome back Ms. Sarah White to the 4/5 class.

Also, best wishes to Mme. Hannah Goodbody as she is wrapping up the year in Grade 1 and preparing for her maternity leave. We offer a warm welcome to Mme. Kulani de Larrinaga to Grade 1 French Immersion who will join us upon our return in January.

## December Spirit Week

<b>HAPPY HOLIDAYS!</b> <b>December Spirit Week</b>	
<b>MON</b> 15	<b>Festive Sweater Day</b> • Wear your holiday attire! 
<b>TUES</b> 16	<b>Grinch Day</b> • Wear green and all your best Grinch gear! 
<b>WED</b> 17	<b>Holidays Around the World Day</b> • Wear the colours of your class's country's flag and participate in SPES' Holidays Around the World activities! 
<b>THURS</b> 18	<b>New Year's Eve Attire</b> • Dress to impress! Wear black, silver and gold! 
<b>FRI</b> 19	<b>Holiday PJ Day</b> • Wear your coziest festive pyjamas. 

## Dressing for the weather

As the weather starts to shift we are getting a few colder days and some wet, rainy days too. Please make sure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. Even if it is a rainy day, we may get a break in the rain and have an opportunity to get outside. As the weather is colder, we still go outside. Soon we will see mittens, hats, snow pants, and boots!

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## 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 Shannon Park.

Call 902-464-2000, ext. 2331 or email [schoolsplus@hrce.ca](mailto:schoolsplus@hrce.ca).

Learn more about SchoolsPlus [here](#).



## HSA and SAC

Our next Home and School Association (HSA) and School Advisory Council (SAC) meetings will be January 22 at 6pm and 7pm in our school library. This is a great opportunity to become involved with our school community. If you are interested or just want to know more about each of these groups, please contact us to let us know; [spes@hrce.ca](mailto:spes@hrce.ca) A big thank you for your support in purchasing Pizza Kit Coupons and the great turn out at our Cookies and Crafts event.

## 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.

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**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](https://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

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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](#).

## 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



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- Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour.

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](#)

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](https://hrce.ca/families/cancellations).

## **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](https://www.myhrce.ca/jobs).

## **Reminders**

- Please, do not send nut or peanut products to school (this includes Nutella products).
- Please note that teachers are on morning duty as of 8:00am. Please do not drop off students before this time. Thank you!
- It is helpful to have a complete change of clothes in your child's backpack just in

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case of mud, puddles, or spills and it may save you a trip to school in the middle of your day.

- Please do not bring dogs onto school grounds.
- Please do not drive or park on school property. There is absolutely no driving/parking on school property for unauthorized vehicles without prior arrangements during the day. Please drive slowly and watch for crosswalks. *When buses arrive, do not drive, or walk around them.* This protects all of us and especially our students.
- Please request proper forms for the administration of any medications. These need to be completed each school year. Medications can be administered to students by school staff during school hours when we have completed forms on file at school. All medications must be in their original containers; prescription medication with the current pharmacy label attached, and non-prescription medication to include the package documentation for guidance *(Parents/guardians are able to request from their pharmacy a separate labelled medication for school use).*
- Please ensure that your child has indoor shoes for school and wears outdoor shoes/boots to help keep our school clean.