

NEWSLETTER

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October 2026

Dear Families,

As we wrap up September, our students and staff are settling into their daily routines. We want to extend a sincere thank you to all of our families for your patience and support as we navigated bus schedule updates throughout the month.

During our first week back, students participated in Pink Shirt Day to reinforce our ongoing commitment to standing up against bullying and creating a welcoming community. It was wonderful seeing so many families join us for Curriculum Night and the Social hosted by our Home & School Association. Safety remains a top priority, and we successfully practiced our emergency routines with a fire drill, a lockdown drill, and a hold and secure drill. We also held our first schoolwide assembly and took part in the annual Terry Fox Walk/Run. Finally, classes engaged in thoughtful discussions for Orange Shirt Day to reflect on and learn about Truth and Reconciliation as we move into the month ahead.

Communication between school and home is very important. The Returning Student Registration Form is available to families via the Parent Portal until October 5th. Even if your info is current and up to date, please follow the instructions in the link and submit the form. The information update also included our yearly permissions and consents. If you need help completing this, please call the school and we will assist.

Wishing you all a fantastic October filled with learning, growth, and memorable experiences.

Sincerely,

Mrs. Gourlay and Mme. Hazel

Upcoming Dates: [Click here for HRCE 26-27 Calendar](#)

- October is Mi'kmaq History Month
- October is Canadian Library Month
- October 1: Treaty Day
- October 1: School Pictures- Grade Pre Primary-Grade 2
- October 2: School Pictures-Grade 2/3 -Grade 6
- October 8: Home & School meeting 6pm & SAC meeting 7pm
- October 12: Thanksgiving Monday - No School
- October 20,21,27,28- Grade 6 Provincial Assessments
- October 22: Halloween Howl (*details to follow*)
- October 23: NSTU Conference Day - No School for Students

October is Mi'kmaq History Month

Each October, Mi'kmaq History Month provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of Mi'kmaq culture, history, language and traditions, while recognizing the important contributions of Mi'kmaq people past and present. Across our schools, students and staff may mark the month through learning, storytelling, art, community connections and cultural experiences that bring Mi'kmaq perspectives into the classroom and school community.

As we learn together, Mi'kmaq History Month reminds us of the importance of listening, building relationships and continuing our shared commitment to truth and reconciliation. Learn more about Mi'kmaq History Month [here](#).

October 1 is Treaty Day

Treaty Day is an opportunity to learn, reflect and deepen our understanding of the historic and ongoing relationships between Mi'kmaq and non-Mi'kmaq people in Nova Scotia.

Treaties are not simply part of our past. They are living agreements that continue to shape our shared responsibilities today. In schools, Treaty Day provides an important opportunity to help students understand Mi'kmaq history, culture, rights and perspectives, while exploring what it means to live together in a spirit of respect, partnership and reciprocity.

By continuing to learn about the Treaties and our responsibilities within them, we help build stronger relationships and contribute to the ongoing work of reconciliation.



World Teachers' Day



October 5th is World Teachers' Day. World Teachers' Day started in 1994 and is now celebrated in over 100 countries around the world. We are fortunate to have such a fantastic staff at Shannon Park Elementary!

Fantastic Friday Phone Calls

We love celebrating our students at Shannon Park. If you get a call from the school on a Friday, there is a good chance it is Mme. Hazel or Mrs. Gourlay calling to tell you your child has been recognized by one of our staff members for doing something “fantastic” that week. We will leave a message if the call goes to voicemail. We will begin these calls Friday, October 9th.



HSA and SAC meeting

On Thursday, October 8th we have our next Home & School meeting at 6pm and our School Advisory Council (SAC) meeting at 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

Grade 6 Provincial Assessments

Our Grade 6 students will be completing the NS Provincial Reading/Writing and Mathematics Assessment this month. The dates have been scheduled for *October 20th, 21st, 27th, and 28th*. Teachers are having ongoing conversations with students about the importance of being rested and having a good breakfast to start their day. Students have had some practice time before the administration of the assessments. If your child will be absent on the listed dates, please let your child's teacher know.

Fire Prevention Week October 4-10

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency is inviting families to take part in Fire Prevention Week, October 4–10. Visit halifax.ca/fpw to complete an online fire safety quiz. Want to win a Nintendo Switch, Apple products or LEGO sets? Participants who score 100% will be entered into a draw for a prize in their age category.

This year's theme, “Safe Charging is a Superpower,” focuses on the safe use and charging of rechargeable devices powered by lithium-ion batteries. These batteries power many everyday devices, including phones, tablets, laptops, e-bikes and power tools. If damaged or charged improperly, they can overheat and cause fires.

Visit halifax.ca/fpw for contest details, videos and fire safety resources, and take a few minutes to test your smoke alarms and review your home fire escape plan.

Growing independence doesn't have to start with a smart phone

As children get older, parents naturally want to give them more independence, such as walking to the park, playing at a friend's house, staying home for a short time, or getting to activities on their own. A smartphone can seem like the obvious way to make this possible, but it isn't the only option.

There are lots of ways families can give children more freedom while keeping communication simple and age-appropriate:

- Long-range walkie-talkies: A simple way for kids to check in while playing in the neighbourhood or exploring outdoors, without access to the internet or social media.
- A home phone: Allows children to call friends, make plans or contact a parent when they're home alone.
- A kids' smartwatch: Some watches offer limited calling or messaging, without the apps, social media and internet access of a smartphone.
- A basic talk-and-text phone: When children eventually need a way to coordinate rides or activities, a simple phone can provide communication without introducing the distractions and social pressures of a smartphone.

The goal is to match the technology to what children actually need. A child who needs to call home doesn't necessarily need a device that also gives them access to social media, games and the internet. Starting with a more limited device can give children time to develop the responsibility, judgment and independence they'll eventually need to manage a smartphone. Explore more resources from Unplugged Canada and join thousands of Canadian families taking the [Unplugged Canada Pledge](#) to delay smartphones and support connected childhoods.

October is Canadian Library Month

October is a chance to celebrate the important role libraries play in our schools — and the Library Support Specialists who bring those spaces to life. Every day, our school libraries help students discover new interests, build literacy skills, find reliable information and, sometimes, simply find a welcoming place to spend some time. Our Library Support Specialists are an important part of making that happen.

Canadian Library Workers Day is recognized on the third Friday of October, followed by Canadian School Library Day on the fourth Monday. These are great opportunities to recognize the people who help make our libraries engaging, inclusive and supportive spaces for students.

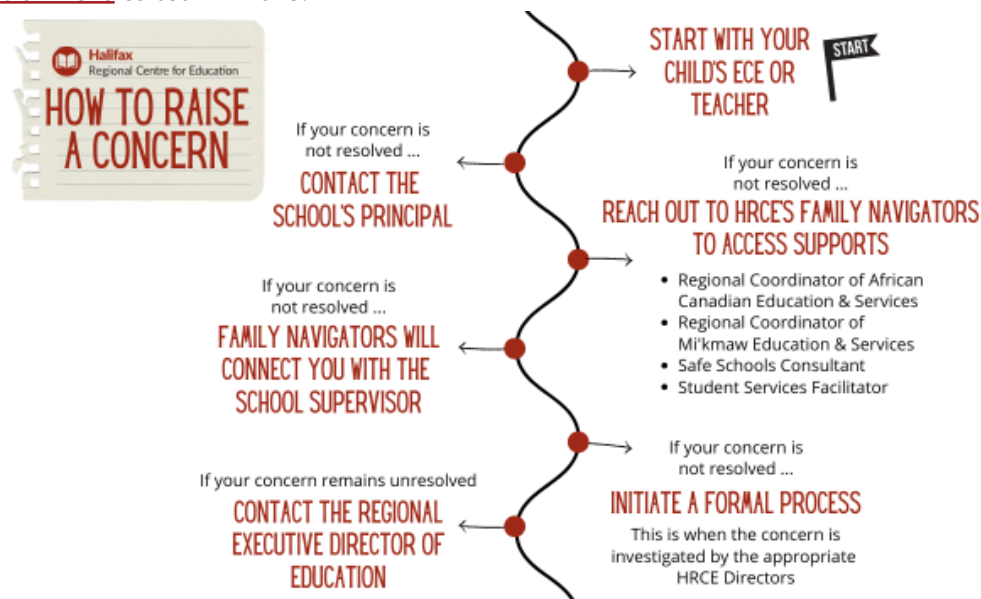


Please join us in thanking our Library Support Specialists for all they do to support students, staff and school communities, especially our very own, Ms. DeCoste, who is a valued member of our Shannon Park community!

Do you know how to raise a concern?

Did you know that there's a protocol in place to help families contact schools or the HRCE 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 [Family Navigators](#) who can provide information about a wide range of supports and resources.
- 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 learn more.



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](#).



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 7:50am. 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 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. This includes over the counter medications.
- Please ensure that your child has indoor shoes for school and wears outdoor shoes/boots to help keep our school clean.