

February 2026 Newsletter

EPEC EDITOR

HOME OF THE PHOENIX

AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH 2026

THEME: STRENGTH IN UNITY – MOVING FORWARD WITH PURPOSE, PROSPERITY, POWER, AND PROGRESS

FEBRUARY IS AFRICAN HERITAGE MONTH, AND WE ARE EXCITED TO CELEBRATE AFRICAN NOVA SCOTIAN CULTURE AND HISTORY WITH OUR STUDENTS. THROUGHOUT THE MONTH, TEACHERS WILL BE ENGAGING STUDENTS IN MEANINGFUL LEARNING EXPERIENCES THAT RECOGNIZE AND HONOUR THE IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT.

OUR TEACHERS REMAIN COMMITTED TO IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES THAT SUPPORT ACHIEVEMENT AND ALIGN WITH OUR SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT GOALS. AS ALWAYS, WE VALUE THE STRONG HOME-SCHOOL PARTNERSHIP AND ENCOURAGE FAMILIES TO STAY IN REGULAR COMMUNICATION WITH TEACHERS SHOULD QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ARISE.

BEING ON TIME HELPS STUDENTS FEEL CALM, CONFIDENT, AND PREPARED FOR LEARNING. THIS INCLUDES ARRIVING AT SCHOOL ON TIME IN THE MORNING AND AFTERNOON, AS WELL AS GETTING TO CLASS ON TIME THROUGHOUT THE DAY. WE UNDERSTAND THAT MORNINGS AND TRANSITIONS CAN SOMETIMES BE BUSY, AND WE TRULY APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT.

TO HELP KEEP FAMILIES INFORMED, YOU MAY RECEIVE A SHORT WEEKLY MESSAGE IF YOUR CHILD HAS BEEN LATE MORE THAN THREE TIMES DURING THE WEEK. THESE MESSAGES ARE MEANT TO BE FRIENDLY AND SUPPORTIVE, SO WE CAN WORK TOGETHER TO BUILD GOOD HABITS EARLY. SHOULD FREQUENT LATENESS CONTINUE, SCHOOL-BASED CONSEQUENCES MAY BE USED IN LINE WITH THE PROVINCIAL CODE OF CONDUCT. ANY CONCERNS OR NEXT STEPS WILL ALWAYS BE SHARED BY SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION.

STUDENTS ARE REMINDED TO BRING A REUSABLE WATER BOTTLE TO SCHOOL EACH DAY, WHICH THEY CAN REFILL AT OUR HALLWAY FILLING STATIONS. ADDITIONALLY, TO SUPPORT A HEALTHY AND COMFORTABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR ALL, WE KINDLY ASK THAT STUDENTS REFRAIN FROM BRINGING SCENTED PRODUCTS TO SCHOOL, SUCH AS HAND CREAM OR HAND SANITIZER. IF THESE ITEMS ARE NEEDED, PLEASE ENSURE THEY ARE SCENT-FREE.

WINTER WEATHER HAS CERTAINLY ARRIVED! AS THE SEASON CONTINUES TO BRING CHANGING CONDITIONS, WE APPRECIATE YOUR SUPPORT IN ENSURING STUDENTS COME TO SCHOOL DRESSED APPROPRIATELY FOR OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES. WE CAREFULLY MONITOR WEATHER CONDITIONS AND PRIORITIZE STUDENT SAFETY WHEN MAKING DECISIONS ABOUT OUTDOOR TIME. GRADE 6 STUDENTS GO OUTSIDE DAILY FOR RECESS, EXCEPT IN CASES OF HEAVY RAIN OR EXTREME COLD, SO PROPER WINTER CLOTHING IS ESSENTIAL.

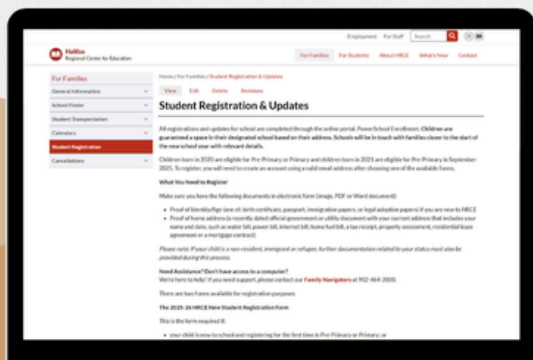
THANK YOU, AS ALWAYS, FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP. TOGETHER, WE CAN ENSURE A SAFE, WELCOMING, AND ENRICHING SCHOOL EXPERIENCE FOR ALL STUDENTS.

WARM REGARDS,
MICHELLE



February is Registration Month!

Visit www.hrce.ca to register today!



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 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.

Will school be cancelled?

HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the normal operations of schools and buses due to weather.

Learn more at
hrce.ca/families/cancellations

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.

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.



What happens when a school loses power?

Learn more at hrce.ca/families/cancellations
under *Power Outage Information for Families*



Halifax
Regional Centre for Education

UPCOMING FREE EVENT!

Thriving Offline:

How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish



When: Tuesday, February 24th @ 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!

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](#).

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](#).

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.



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](#).



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

Email hostastudent@hrce.ca
or call **902-464-2000 ext. 2548**



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

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

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.

Important dates to remember in February

February is African Heritage Month

February is Registration Month

February 16: Heritage Day

(no classes - all schools)

February 17: Lunar New Year



EPEC SCHOOL CLOTHING – SEE LINK BELOW

<https://pmgsw.com/products/Eastern-Passage-Education-Centre-c168124758>

This is where you will find the EPEC Athletics Calendar.

This will give you information on tryouts, practices and games for all sports at EPEC!

[EPEC Athletics Calendar](#)

[Eastern Passage Education Centre](#)

[Home of the Phoenix!](#)

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