



# AJ Smeltzer December Newsletter

Good Morning AJ Families,

Hope that you had a great weekend. Please take a moment to review the information below:

## **Progress Conferences:**

Our progress conferences will take place in the afternoon and evening of Thursday, December 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025. We will be offering time slots in the afternoon for phone appointments, and evening time slots for in-person conferences. Signup will b

For those selecting phone interviews, you can expect a call at the time you selected. The caller ID may read “unknown”, “private”, “AJ Smeltzer Junior High School” or show up as an out of area long distance number depending on the medium being used by the teacher. We will be using PTC Fast to schedule appointments. The link for signing up is: [https://ptcfast.com/schools/AJ\\_Smeltzer\\_1](https://ptcfast.com/schools/AJ_Smeltzer_1)

If you require assistance in signing up for times or require further information, we encourage you to contact the main office at (902) 864-6846. Signup will close on December 3rd, 2025.

## **Homework Hub, Mathematics:**

The Homework Hub is open for mathematics tutoring for grade 4-6 and grades 7-12. Tutoring is available during the following times:

- Grades 4-6: Monday-Wednesday 5:30-7:30 pm
- Grades 7-12: Sunday-Thursday 5:30-9:30 pm

Nova Scotia Homework HUB / APPU aux devoirs Nouvelle-Écosse

**NEED HELP WITH A MATH QUESTION?**

- GNSPES Access**  
Click the Nova Scotia Homework Hub icon
- Available 24/7**  
- textbooks  
- videos  
- practice questions  
- vocabulary review
- Bilingual Tutors**  
Tutors for Grade 4 - 6  
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday  
5:30 - 7:30 p.m.

1-888-444-6607 Nova Scotia Homework HUB / APPU aux devoirs Nouvelle-Écosse gnspes.ca

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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 your school. Call 902-464-2000, ext. 2331 or email [schoolsplus@hrce.ca](mailto:schoolsplus@hrce.ca). Learn more about SchoolsPlus [here](#).

### **After School Band Concert:**

Mr. DeCoste will be hosting a concert featuring our after school band on Tuesday, December 16th, 2025 beginning at 6:00 pm. The concert will feature members from the extracurricular band playing as an ensemble as well as playing in a few small groups and solos. Mr. DeCoste is planning another concert in the new year which will feature the band classes.

### **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.

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.

### **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 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](#).

### **AJ Smeltzer Spirit Week:**

Our student school leadership team is organizing a spirit week for the week before the holiday break (December 15-19th). The week before, announcements and posters will share the themes for each day.

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

### **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 About Inclement Weather?

- 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, [click here](#)

### **AJ Smeltzer Athletics:**

We would like to congratulate the members of our female identifying volleyball team who won the 2025 Mariner Zone Championship. Congratulations to all team members and coaches !!!

**Female Identifying Basketball Team:** Tryouts will be held on Monday, December 1st and Wednesday, December 4rd after school. The try out will end at 4:00pm.

**Male Identifying Basketball Team:** Tryouts will continue on Tuesday, December 2nd after school. The try out will end at 4:00pm.

**New To Me Sale:**

This year, we will be hosting our annual 'New To Me' sale on Wednesday, December 17th. For those of you who are not aware of what this is all about, it is a sale where students will be able to purchase items (new and gently used) at a price that is affordable to them. All items will be \$2 and under. Students will go at some point during the day with their homeroom class to purchase items. The order will be done by a random draw in order to keep things fair. The money raised will then support a family within the school community.

**Schoolsplus Holiday Food Blitz:**

Schoolplus will be hosting a holiday food blitz during the month of December. They will be distributing nonperishable food items for up to twenty five families. Space is limited. register by completing the [google form](#) or using the qr code on the flyer.



**Upcoming Dates: 2025 / 2026**

- December 3rd: Grade Seven Immunizations
- December 3rd: Term one report cards will be distributed
- December 4th: Progress conferences & teacher professional practice day (no classes)
- December 10th: International Human Rights Day
- December 14th: First day of Hanukkah
- December 16th: Extracurricular band concert @ 6:00 pm
- December 17th: New to Me Sale
- December 19th: Last day of school for students before holiday break
- December 25th: Christmas DAY
- December 26th: First day of Kwanzaa
- January 5th: First day back after the holiday break

Best,

*Dean Lee*

AJ Smeltzer Principal