



AJ Smeltzer November Newsletter

Good Morning AJ Families,

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

Nova Scotia School Lunch Program:

AJ Smeltzer is a part of the Nova Scotia School Lunch Program! This year's lunch program is better than ever, and we encourage all families to take part. Please see the menu and order at nslunch.ca. Lunch is affordable for every family because the Program is pay-what-you-can. After choosing lunches, the system gives families three payment options: pay the \$6.50 cost of the lunch, pay a part of the cost, or pay nothing. The Nova Scotia school lunch program has been very popular with students.

Fire Drill:

We will have our final fire drill for the fall between Monday November 3rd and Friday November 7th, 2025. Our students have been doing a fantastic job exiting the building in a safe manner. Teachers will review procedures and evacuation routes with students prior to the fire drill.

Student Drop Off and Pick Up:

It is our top priority to ensure student safety, especially during daily drop-off and pick-up times. Families are asked to not enter the school parking lot before or after school, or whenever students are outside during the day. When dropping students off, please be mindful of school buses and avoid turning around in areas where students and buses are present. Thank you for your cooperation and continued support in helping us keep all students safe as they arrive and leave school property.

November 8 is Indigenous Veterans Day:

Indigenous Veterans Day is an important occasion to honour the sacrifices and contributions of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples who have served in the Canadian Armed Forces. Recognizing this day in schools is especially significant, as it provides students with the opportunity to learn about the often overlooked histories and experiences of Indigenous veterans. By commemorating Indigenous Veterans Day in our schools, we ensure that younger generations understand the vital role Indigenous peoples have played in defending Canada, while also promoting respect, reconciliation, and a more inclusive understanding of Canadian history. This recognition helps strengthen empathy, respect for diversity and a greater appreciation for the many ways in which Indigenous peoples have shaped our country.

Remembrance Day:

Remembrance Day holds an important place in our schools as it provides a meaningful opportunity for our students to learn about the sacrifices made by veterans and all those who have served in times of conflict. Through ceremonies, discussions and creative projects, we demonstrate respect and gratitude for the freedoms Canadians enjoy. Observing Remembrance Day also helps students connect with Canada's history and reinforces the values of peace, tolerance and community responsibility.

AJ Smeltzer will have a Remembrance Day Ceremony on Monday, November 10th at 10:00 am. If you are interested in attending, please contact the main office to let them know by Friday, November 7th.

We are looking for pictures of students' family members who are in or have served in the military. Please send digital copies to mhalliday@hrce.ca and include the students name, homeroom, and relationship to service person. All submissions must be sent in by November 6th to be included in the presentation.

Transgender Awareness Week:

Transgender Awareness Week, observed in the second week of November, provides an important opportunity to strengthen understanding and respect for the transgender community, to encourage inclusivity in our schools and to promote safe environments where all students feel valued and supported. Trans Awareness Week takes place the week before Transgender Day of Remembrance on November 20. Learn more [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.

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](#)

Learning more about the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy:

Did you know? [The Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) guides our approach to attendance and is in place to support all students. The policy states that regular, punctual attendance supports academic success, responsibility, and preparation for the future.

Ensuring regular attendance is a joint effort between students, families and schools. As a parent/guardian, you play an important role by monitoring attendance, communicating with the school when your child is absent, and supporting your child's regular attendance.

What Should You Know?

- Communication about absences
 - Schools will monitor attendance and lateness.
 - All absences must be communicated to the school, following the school's procedure.
 - If absenteeism or lateness reaches 10% of class time, the school will begin to engage more actively with the student and family.
 - If it goes beyond 15%, more targeted supports may be used (counselling, referrals, community supports).

What Can You Do?

- Monitor and encourage punctual, consistent attendance
- Maintain open communication with the school when absences or challenges arise
- Work with school staff to understand supports or accommodations for your child
- Be aware of the thresholds (10%, 15%) and possible consequences (intervention, loss of credit in high school)
- Remember: the policy allows flexibility. If your child has a legitimate reason for missing school (health, family issue, etc.), schools are encouraged to take a supportive approach.

AI and Your Child's Learning:

HRCE teachers and staff are introducing students to artificial intelligence (AI) in safe and meaningful ways that build awareness, creativity, and critical thinking. Together, we can help our learners understand how to use AI responsibly and confidently in their education and everyday lives. [Click here](#) for an information sheet that provides you with starting points for conversations about AI and learning.

School Advisory Council:

School Advisory Councils play an important role in supporting student success at the school community level. We are currently looking for one grade seven parent volunteer that would be interested in serving on the School Advisory Council. Please reach out to dlee@hrce.ca to express your interest.

Hungry For Something Fun? Check Out The Nova Scotia School Lunch cookbook:

Hungry for something fun? Get cooking with the new cookbook *What's for Lunch? Nova Scotia Recipes to Cook and Enjoy Together*, a joyful collection of most-loved recipes from school food programs. Proceeds from the sale of this book go directly to supporting school healthy eating programs in Nova Scotia, such as breakfast and snack, cooking clubs and school gardens. Learn more and order yours [here](#).

Whether you're a new cook, a young chef, or a family learning together in the kitchen, *What's for Lunch?* invites you to bake up a handmade pizza, create a picnic plate, make a big batch of breakfast sandwiches, or stir up some butter chicken! Each easy-to-follow recipe comes with tasty ideas for toppings, sides, and simple swaps to make it just right for you and your family.

Upcoming Dates: 2025 / 2026

November 6th: Picture Retake Day
November 8th: Indigenous Veterans Day
November 10th: Remembrance Day Ceremony
November 11th: Remembrance Day - No classes
November 13th to 19th: Transgender Awareness Week
November 21st: Assessment and Evaluation Day - No Classes

Best,

Dean Lee

AJ Smeltzer Principal