

Portland Estates Elementary School

45 Portland Hills Drive

Dartmouth, NS

March 2025

We had Winter this year! The playground was mostly ice for quite a while. We were not able to get to the school sign safely, so January changed to March. It has been an eventful winter here at Portland Estates Elementary School and Spring is upon us! Our students have been busy learning in their classrooms and building relationships with one another. They are growing as learners and becoming more confident as they take risks, problem solve, and work together. They have participated in Theme Days, Coins for Books, Snow days, Home Alone, African Heritage presentations and more! Thank you to our Grade Five students for the wonderful podcasts throughout African Heritage month – we have learned so much from you!

Regular attendance is very important. A student's over-all growth increases significantly over the time when they attend school regularly and have strong connections to all aspects of classroom and school learning. Research shows there is a powerful link between successful learning and regular school attendance. While we recognize students may be periodically absent from school due to illness or important family plans and trips, please support your child by working hard to attend school regularly, and to be on time.

Thank you to the PTO for organizing the Staff Appreciation luncheon on February 12. The food was fantastic with a great theme with beautiful decorations. A big thank you to all the parents/guardians who donated food to this event and helped to serve lunch to the teaching staff, educational program assistants, admin assistant, Early Childhood educators, Excel staff, lunch monitors, student teachers and the Crossing guards.

We hope all the Portland Estates families had a relaxing holiday over the March Break.

Mrs. Henman-Poirier

Important Upcoming Dates:

March 25- Spring Hat Day

March 31: International Transgender Day of Visibility

April 3 – PD Day/ Parent-Teacher interviews 2:00pm – 6:00pm (No School for students)

April 12- PTO Consignment Sale

Recess snacks

Cafeteria – The Cafeteria now sells recess snacks. It is cash only. Students may come to the cafeteria at recess to purchase. Milk can be ordered online or purchased with cash for \$.40.

Professional Learning Communities (PLC)

When teachers learn, students learn. Teaching quality is improved through continuous professional learning. In order to remain effective in today's classroom, teachers must be continuously looking at strategies to improve their practice. The needs of society and our students continue to change from year to year. Professional development is very important; one way for continuous professional learning is the Professional Learning Community (PLC). Here at Portland Estates, staff members work together in Grade level PLCs on a weekly basis to provide the best for our students!



HEAD LICE: PLEASE CHECK YOUR CHILD'S HAIR REGULARLY

Reminder to parents to check your child's head regularly for head lice. Please report any discoveries of head lice to the main office (902-433-7100).

The **HRCE Head Lice Guidelines** asks parents to:

- Check their child for nits and head lice on a regular basis;
- Notify the school if their child has head lice;
- Check other family members or others spending time in the house of children identified as having head lice;
- Provide recommended head lice treatment to a child identified as having head lice as outlined by *Public Health How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head Lice*, and complete first treatment prior to their child returning to school;
- Call 8-1-1 at any time to speak with a Registered Nurse for more information and guidance if head lice are still present after the second treatment

Additional information on how to prevent, find, and treat head lice is available at www.novascotia.ca/dhw/publications/public-health-education/07135-head-lice-pamphlet-en.pdf

ALWAYS IMPROVING- Student Success Planning (SSP)

Our long-term goals for Portland Estates Elementary are:

1. We will improve achievement in literacy for each of our students, with a specific focus on our students of African and/or Mi'kmaw/Indigenous ancestry.
2. We will improve achievement in mathematics for each of our students, with a specific focus on our students of African and/or Mi'kmaw/Indigenous ancestry.
3. We will improve well-being at our school for each of our students, with a specific focus on our students of African and/or Mi'kmaw/Indigenous ancestry..

We will continue to work over the remainder of this school year to improve teacher practice and improve student achievement in Math and Literacy. We look forward to working with you to help all students be all they can be!

Permanent Resident Cards: f you child has a permanent resident card, please send in a copy to the school office. This is a necessary requirement of their ongoing registration at our school.

MSI Cards: Several students' MSI cards have expired. Please ensure that you contact the office with the up-to-date expiry date.

Lost and Found – We continue to have an assortment of lost and found items. If your child is missing something, please encourage them to go and check the lost and found table by the office. A reminder that belongings labeled with a name are much easier to reunite with their owners.

LUNCH MONITORS WANTED!!

Are you interested in helping out the school during the day while getting paid? Portland Estates Elementary is looking for full and part-time lunch monitors for the remainder of the school year. All applicants require a Child Abuse Check and a Criminal Records check (including a vulnerable sector check). If you are interested, please call the school at 902-433-7100 for more information.

EXPERIENCED CANDIDATES NEED NOT APPLY: February was registration month but it is not too late to register for Primary or Pre-primary for September 2025. Is your child turning four or five before December 2025? If so, it's time to register them for Primary or Pre-primary! Please go to www.hrce.ca and follow the Student Registration instructions.

OUTDOOR CLOTHING Please remember to dress for the winter weather. Parents, please remind your child of the importance of wearing proper outdoor clothing outside for fitness breaks. Dry clothing items available in your child's school bag is a good idea during this wet, unpredictable weather period.

WATER BOTTLES

We are asking for parents help to have each student bring a refillable water bottle each day to school with them. We no longer have traditional water fountains, we only have water filling stations. We thank you in advance for your participation in this matter.

Literacy News – 7 Keys to Unlock Meaning – Making Connections

Background knowledge is all that you as a reader bring to a book: Your personal history, all you've read or seen, your adventures, the experiences of your day-to-day life, your relationships, your passions.

Talking about your background knowledge with your child is one of the great pleasures you can share- tell stories, start conversations, read a page or a paragraph and say- That reminds me of this book I read, or this story I heard on the news... or that makes me remember when...

As your child listens, asks questions, and understands, they are not just gaining knowledge from you; they are also sharpening and strengthening their power over language.

Background knowledge is like Velcro. It helps new information adhere. The more background knowledge you develop and use, the more you can make sense of and remember new information.

As a parent you can encourage your child to make various connections around reading: text to self, text to text, and text to world. With text to self connections, what you read reminds you of something from your own life. These types of connections are important because brain research shows that "emotions drive attention, create meaning, and have their own memory pathways." Making an emotional connection helps us to remember what we read.

With text-to-text connections, what you read reminds you about something else you have read or seen on television or at the movies. When text-to-world connections are made, what you read reminds you of something in the broader world. Books, articles, and stories make you think about something beyond your own life. What you are doing is showing your child that reading goes far beyond the words on the page.

Background knowledge is the cornerstone of the thinking strategies. If your child knows how to activate pertinent background knowledge, they will see more detailed mental images, ask deeper questions, and be better able to extend their own thinking.

Source: 7 Keys to Comprehension, How to Help Your Kids Read It and Get It!

March is Nutrition Month

Did you know? March is Nutrition Month! This is a great time to explore and learn about food. An important part of this is food literacy, which includes having the knowledge and skills to grow, choose, prepare, and talk about food.

Some ways to engage your family during Nutrition Month:

- Get kids involved in meal planning. Ask them to help choose recipes, write out grocery lists and explore grocery store flyers.
- Make cooking a family event! Kids can participate in age-appropriate tasks, such as measuring ingredients or setting the table.
- Enjoy meals together when you are able. Mealtimes can be a great time to connect in conversation.
- Start planning for an indoor or outdoor garden. This is a great way to explore where our food comes from.

This year's theme, Nourish to Flourish, highlights the important role that food has on our physical, mental and emotional health and well-being.

Whether it's planting an indoor or outdoor garden, cooking together with family, or enjoying a meal with friends, food provides opportunities for building social connections that can support improved feelings of belonging and overall well-being. This is a great time to explore and learn about food. An important part of this is food literacy, which includes having the knowledge and skills to grow, choose, prepare, and talk about food.



March is Nutrition Month

Whether it's planting a garden, cooking with family, or enjoying a meal with friends, food provides opportunities for building social connections that can support improved feelings of belonging and overall well-being.



School Bus Safety Reminder

More than 33,000 HRCE students take the school bus. Making sure they have a safe and happy trip to and from school is very important to us. Please talk with your child about school bus safety on a regular basis. Students should tell their bus driver and/or school principal if they have any problems.

Here are some important safety tips:

Bus Stop Safety

- Be on time for the bus. Don't run to or from the bus.
- Stand back when the bus arrives and give everyone space. Get on or off the bus one at a time.
- Always cross the road in front of the bus. Walk to a spot where you can see the driver. When they signal it's safe, walk to the middle of the road. STOP, LOOK, and LISTEN, then cross when it's safe.
- Never crawl under the bus or cross the road from behind it.

School Bus Safety

- Respect and listen to the driver. Their job is to focus on the road, so avoid distracting them.
- Respect others and your space.
- Keep noise levels down.
- Stay seated while the bus is moving.
- Keep your arms, legs, and head inside the bus.
- Do not throw anything inside or outside the bus.
- Keep the aisle clear.

Did you know: It's illegal for drivers to pass a school bus when it has stopped with its red lights flashing. Bus drivers will activate their amber lights 150m before they stop as a warning to motorists.

More information about HRCE student transportation and school bus safety can be found [here](#).



School Bus Safety Tips

A few bus safety reminders for all riders:

- Please respect and listen to the driver and avoid distracting them.
- Please keep noise levels to a minimum.
- Do not stand or move seats while the bus is in motion.
- Never put your hands, arms, feet or head out of the bus window.
- Ask the driver for permission before you open the bus windows.
- Do not throw anything inside the bus or out of the windows.
- Keep the aisle clear at all times when the bus is in motion.

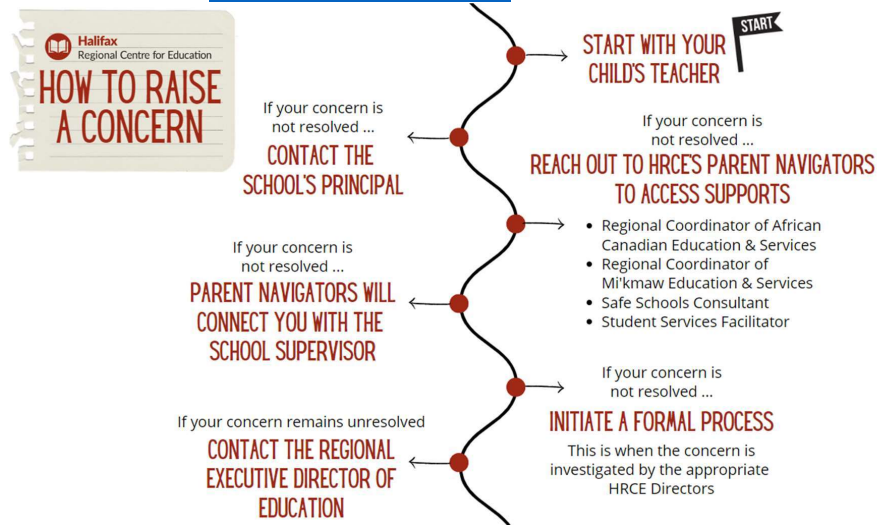
 **Halifax**
Regional Centre for Education

Do you know how to raise a concern?

Did you know that there's a protocol in place to help families contact schools, or HRCE Central 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 Parent Navigators](#) who can provide information about a wide range of supports and resources or connect you with the school supervisor.
- 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 view the [Parent/Guardian Concern Policy](#).



Did you know? Halifax Regional Arts

Did you know that Halifax Regional Arts (HRA) gives opportunities to all HRCE students to have enhanced fine arts experiences?

Did you know that all programming, including all instruments, supplies, and materials are FREE?

HRA provides fine arts experiences, including music, drama, dance and visual arts. Each family of schools has at least one HRA Fine Arts Specialist (Visual Arts, Drama, Dance) that have reached nearly 53,000 students since September!

Curious to learn more? Visit <https://hra.hrce.ca/>



Did you know?

HRA provides fine arts experiences, including music, drama, dance and visual arts!

Learn more at hra.hrce.ca

Community News - Royal Soccer

The Royal City Soccer Club, a registered non-profit community organization, is proud to host their 32nd annual grassroots summer day camps. The program is designed to promote personal development, team building and of course, FUN! Uniquely designed to offer a more soccer focused morning with a leisure swim with other organized activities in the afternoon. The program operates during all weeks in July and August for children aged 5 to 13. For more information or to register, visit royalsoccer.com or call 1-800-427-0536.



Diamond Dawgs of Dartmouth Minor Baseball

The Diamond Dawgs, a proud member of DDMBA and Baseball Nova Scotia, would like to announce that baseball registration is now open for the 2025 season! We are open to players of 5 years to 18 years of age.

REGISTER AT: iplayball.ca

Why Diamond Dawgs?

GAMES – being a part of the DDMBA, out players, U9 and above, will have weekly practice as well as 1-2 games per week against teams in our neighbouring communities.

SAFETY – we have a board position dedicated to ensuring all coached and board members have background checks

EXPERIENCE – our board is committed to providing our players and families with a positive experience to have them part of baseball for years to come

Diamond Dawgs will once again host:

- Blue Jays Rally Cap program for players 7 years and under
- Challenger Baseball Program for Dartmouth



Portland Estates PTO Children's Consignment Sale

Saturday April 12, 2025

10 am - 1pm

Want to sell items, please contact ptokidssale@gmail.com

Admission: \$2