

Portland Estates Elementary School

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November 2025

NOVEMBER 2025 NEWSLETTER

Dear Portland Estates Families,

It is hard to believe that two months of school have passed. November is here and it is a month of transitions and change. The clocks have moved back. The leaves have nearly all fallen and the preparations for winter are all but finished. Students have settled into the routines of school. With the changing of the colour of the leaves comes a change in weather and the students go outside for play. Often students can come in wet/muddy and need a change of clothes. **If you have not yet done so, please send a change of clothes for those times when needed for our younger students.**

Cross Country wrapped up. Way to go runners. We would like to extend a HUGE "Thank You" to Mrs. MacDonald and all the parent volunteers for coaching and organizing the runners in the running club. We hope more students will join the Running Club in the spring.

We want to thank our wonderful PTO and volunteers for another successful Fall Family Dance. Thank you for all you do providing our students and families with fun events throughout the year. Next up is our Cookies with Santa event on November 29 and our very popular Basket raffle.

Our Remembrance Day Assembly will take place on Monday, November 10 at 11 am and parents are welcome to attend. If your child belongs to Guides/Scouts/Cadets, they are invited to wear their uniform that day. Just a reminder that classes are not in session on November 11th to observe Remembrance Day and November 21st, our Assessment & Evaluation Day for this term.

It has been a privilege to read with many students who are working so diligently towards their goal of becoming a better reader. Practice, practice, practice equates to reading success. We welcome volunteers who wish to come in and read with our students.

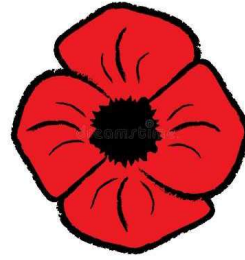
The month ahead brings our Remembrance Day Assembly, School Colours Day, Assessment & Evaluation Day. Parent/Teacher interviews will take place on December 4. Please keep in mind that these conferences are merely a check-in. I recommend you contact your child's teacher every time you have a question or concern.

Stay warm,

Your PEES Administrative Team



Important Dates to Remember:



November 8- Indigenous Veterans Day

November 10 - Remembrance Day Ceremony 11 am

November 11, 2024- Remembrance Day -- No School

November 13- PTO meeting 7pm - PEES Library - All welcome!

November 13-19- Transgender Awareness Week

November 21 - Assessment & Evaluation Day - No school for students

November 28 - School Colours Day - Wear your PEES gear, the colour Blue or your favourite team apparel

November 29- Cookies with Santa - 10:30 am

December 2-4- Book Fair

December 4 -PD Day/Parent-Teacher interviews (No school for students)

Lates We continue to have an inordinate number of students arriving past the morning bell on a daily basis. Many days it is as many as 20-30 children late. This creates a very stressful situation for all. Research says that academic achievement is negatively affected by chronic lateness and we want to ensure all our students reach their fullest potential. Office staff spend time signing students in when they need to focus on safe arrival protocols. The students who enter the classroom 10-20 minutes late lose instructional time and a chance to settle into the morning routines. Although we understand that life happens, we respectfully ask that students arrive on time to limit the disruptions to learning and teaching that have already begun. Instruction begins promptly at **9:00am**. Students can enter their classrooms starting at **8:40 am** to prepare for their day of learning.

School Advisory Council (SAC): Our SAC (School Advisory Council) meets 6 times a year. The members are made up of parents, community members and staff members. Information is shared around policies, protocols, and academic learning taking place at our school.

Poppy Donations for Remembrance Day - All Portland Estates Elementary School students will be provided with a poppy on November 10. The poppies have been provided by The Canadian Legion. If you would like to make a donation for your child's poppy, you can donate online to The Royal Canadian Legion Dominion Command Poppy Trust Fund. <https://legion.ca/home> or send in a cash donation to be put in the poppy bin in the office.

Milk order - Parents can order whole white milk for their children for 40 cents each. Please complete the form at the end of the newsletter and return it to the school office with money.

Dropping off Items/Picking Up Students: Just a reminder to have all items (lunches, band instruments, clothing) labeled with child's name and Homeroom teacher's name, if you are dropping off items to the school for your child. When picking up your child- please call the office when you have arrived in the parking lot and we will dismiss your child from class.

Head Lice Reminders We encourage parents to make checking their child's head for the presence of nits and or lice a regular part of their routine. Please notify the school if your child has head lice and provide the recommended treatment before 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 necessary second treatment. Successful treatment

included a second application of product 8 to 10 days after the initial treatment. For information on the prevention and treatment of head lice, refer to the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness pamphlet, How to Prevent, Find and Treat Head lice on our website https://ifs.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/websites/ifs.hrsb.ca/our-school-file/2018/01/head_lice_pamphlet.pdf

Lost and Found The items in our lost and found bins are piling up. These items can be found in the main lobby. Please remind your child to look for any missing items.

Homework- The DEECD has a policy on Homework - here are some excerpts:

2. The Purpose of Homework

Homework has one or more of the following three purposes:

- Prepare information or materials for future learning activities (e.g., gather resources, read something for a class discussion, or rehearse for a presentation).
- Practice new knowledge or new skills (e.g., read for pleasure, practice physical skills, practice a musical instrument, use new knowledge to complete a project, or practice basic literacy and math skills).
- Enrich students' understanding of a topic and apply it in new ways (e.g., research local news, investigate a science experiment, write daily or weekly reflections in a journal, or apply skills to a class project).

The purpose of homework will vary by grade and subject:

- Homework assigned in grades primary–6 will – enhance student learning of foundational skills in reading and math (e.g., reading for pleasure, educational games) – gradually introduce time to practice or apply learning in other subject areas – promote healthy growth and development (e.g., practicing physical skills, interviewing family members)

The development of life skills (e.g., time management, self-direction, independent problem solving) will be an important element of homework at all grade levels (primary–12)

3. Standards for Effective Homework

Homework assignments will

- reinforce, enrich, or help students prepare for classroom learning
 - be designed with consideration for the needs and circumstances of each student
 - be appropriate for each student's age and developmental stage
 - have a clear purpose
 - directly connect to what students are learning in their classes
 - build on skills or knowledge that a student already has
 - be designed so that the student can do the work without extra help
 - be evaluated promptly
 - provide evidence of student learning
 - offer a way for families to support their children's learning, without requiring family members to teach new skills or concepts
 - be coordinated by teachers and administrators through a school-wide approach that ensures assignments are realistic and fair to all students
- Class projects and assignments are opportunities for students to show what they have learned. Class projects and assignments should be evaluated to provide feedback to students and to contribute to their grades.

Evaluation will

- check that students have understood and followed directions
- provide specific information to students about their work
- describe areas for improvement • provide positive praise and reinforcement
- suggest strategies for moving forward
- encourage students to respond to feedback and try new approaches to their schoolwork

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.

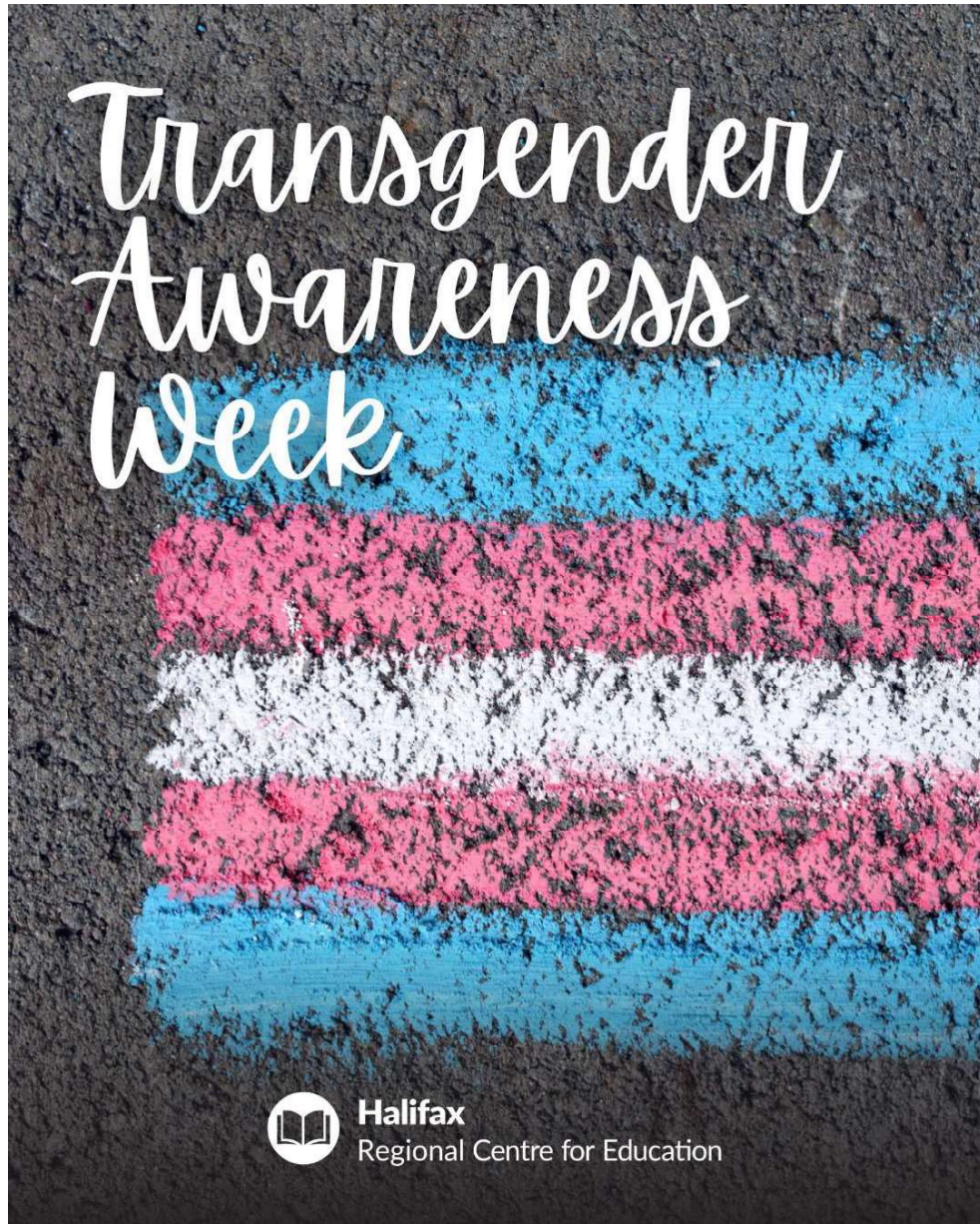
November 11 is Remembrance Day



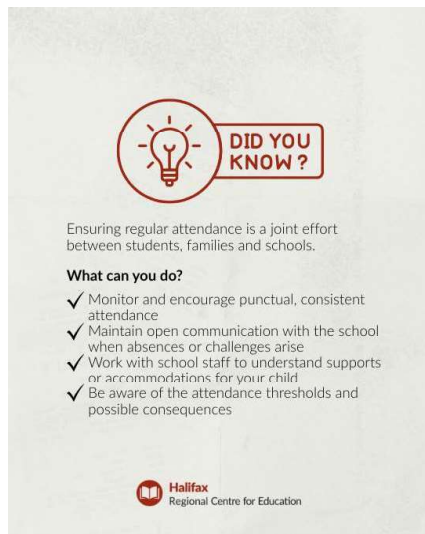
Remembrance Day holds an important place in our schools as it provides a meaningful opportunity for our students to learn about the sacrifices made by veterans and all those who have served in times of conflict. Through ceremonies, discussions and creative projects, we demonstrate respect and gratitude 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.

November 13-19 is Transgender Awareness Week

Transgender Awareness Week 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. Learn more [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).
- **High school credit requirement**
 - For Grades 10–12, students must attend at least 80% of class time to earn the credit.
 - If more than 20% of class time is missed, and efforts to improve attendance haven't succeeded, the teacher may recommend "loss of credit." The principal makes the final decision.

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.

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.

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. This informational sheet provides you with starting points for conversations about AI and learning.

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) AND YOUR CHILD'S LEARNING

A QUICK GUIDE FOR PARENTS AND
GUARDIANS IN HRCE



WHAT IS AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI) means computers that can learn from information and find patterns to help make decisions. AI doesn't think or feel like people—it uses data to make connections that led to informed responses.



HOW IS AI USED IN SCHOOLS?

- Teachers choose if and how AI is used in the classroom.
- Some lessons may include AI tools for learning or creativity.
- Students learn how to use technology safely and responsibly.



HOW AI CAN HELP LEARNING?

AI can:

- Give students quick feedback.
- Help with idea generation when a child is stuck.
- Adjust lessons to fit different learning needs.
- Change reading levels of text so it is more easily accessible.

Remember, teachers will always tell students when they can or cannot use AI for school work.



AI PRIVACY AND SAFETY TIPS:

- Never share personal info with AI tools.
- Only use apps approved by your school or regional centre.
- Look closely at the age restrictions of AI tools.
- Talk with your child about what's real, what's private, and what's fair online.



AT HOME YOU CAN HELP BY:

- Setting screen time limits and tech-free times.
- Talking about what your child does online.
- Reminding your child to check if AI answers make sense.
- Asking teachers about the AI usage guidelines.
- Reviewing classroom/school academic integrity guidelines.

WANT TO LEARN MORE?

Scan the QR code for a list of approved learning tools and information about technology in education.



**Halifax**
Regional Centre for Education

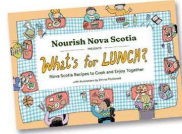
Hungry for something fun? Check out the Nova Scotia school lunch cookbook!



Cook up your favourite school meals at home

with Nourish Nova Scotia's new cookbook!

Within its pages, you'll find easy recipes, meet inspiring lunch heroes, explore local ingredients, and enjoy bite-sized food facts.



All proceeds from the sale of this cookbook will support food programs in Nova Scotia schools.



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.

Within its pages, you will meet some of the inspiring folks behind Nova Scotia's made-from-scratch school lunches, explore where local food ingredients come from, and discover bite-sized fun facts to spark curiosity. Colourful illustrations by students at Oxford School in Halifax and beloved local illustrator Emma FitzGerald bring it all to life!

ARTSHINE- Winter session at Portland Estates Elementary School

- **Registration Opening:** Artshine Winter I Registration will begin on Monday, October 27th. Parents can register and pay for the program through [our website](#).
- **Direct Registration Link:** <https://app.amilia.com/store/en/artshine/shop/activities/6418633>
- **Program Dates:** Nov 26, Dec 3, 10, 17, Jan 7, 14

Portland Estates Elementary Milk Order

Milk can be ordered for students at a cost of \$.40 per carton. If you would like to order milk for lunch for November 2025, please complete the following and send in cash or cheque for the amount of \$7.20. **Milk from November 3 to November 28.**

Student: _____ Class: _____

Amount enclosed: _____ Cash or cheque only