

Portland Estates Elementary School

45 Portland Hills Drive

Dartmouth, NS

March 2026

We had Winter this year! And the snow keeps coming! 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, Artshine, Home Alone, Stadacona Band Trip, Winter Olympic Challenges, 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 25. 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, caretakers, 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 8:** International Women's Day
- **March 10-** Superhero Day
- **March 13:** Elementary/Junior High/Middle School Assessment & Evaluation Day (no classes - elem/JH/middle only)
- **March 16-20:** March Break
- **March 21:** World Down Syndrome Day
- **March 21:** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- **March 26-** Spring Hat Day
- **March 26-** Ellenville Parent meeting for Grade Six Intensive French Program – 6 pm
- **March 31:** International Transgender Day of Visibility
- **March 31-** Progress Reports sent home through Edupost
- **April 2 –** PD/Parent-Teacher meetings (No school for Students)
- **April 25-** PTO Consignment Sale

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!

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.

EXPERIENCED CANDIDATES NEED NOT APPLY: February was registration month but it is not too late to register for Primary or Pre-primary for September 2026. Is your child turning four or five before December 2026? 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.

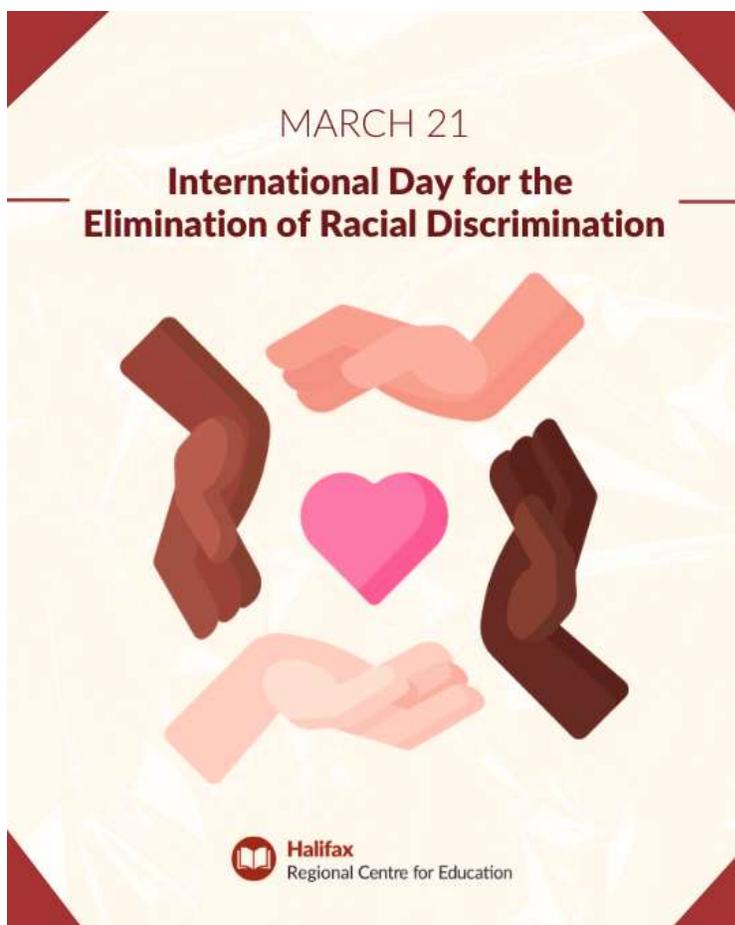
As a parent you can encourage your child to make various connections around reading: text to self, text to text, and text to world. With text to self connections, what you read reminds you of something from your own life. These types of connections are important because brain research shows that “emotions 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 21 is International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination



Today we recognize International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination to build awareness, empathy, and respect among students of all backgrounds. The United Nations established this day in 1966 to call for a global commitment to ending racial discrimination in all its forms.

By learning about the impacts of discrimination and celebrating diversity, children gain social skills and knowledge to be inclusive both within school and home community. Families are our students first educators and through your continuous conversation valuing equity and the elimination of racism, we will continue our shared goal of a society where racism no longer exist.

March 21 is World Down Syndrome Day



World Down Syndrome Day, celebrated each year on March 21, gives us the chance to recognize those with Down syndrome and the awesome contributions they make to our school communities. It's an opportunity for families, students, and staff to strengthen inclusion, acceptance, and belonging. By celebrating differences and promoting understanding, our schools help create welcoming environments where every child feels valued and supported.

On this day, many schools encourage students and staff to wear mismatched socks as a colourful symbol of diversity and solidarity. Activities such as assemblies, classroom discussions, and creative projects highlight the abilities of individuals with Down syndrome, fostering empathy and friendship throughout the school. These efforts ensure that everyone has a voice and a place in our communities, reinforcing the importance of respect and kindness.

March is Nutrition Month: Make the Most of the Nova Scotia School Lunch Program



March is celebrated across Canada as Nutrition Month, a perfect opportunity for families to focus on building healthy eating habits together. Nutrition Month allows us to explore sustainable eating patterns, food literacy, and learning about the benefits of balance and variety in everyday meals. By highlighting the connection between nutrition and long-term health, Nutrition Month empowers everyone to build habits that benefit both individuals and the planet.

Use Nutrition Month as a reminder to take advantage of the **Nova Scotia School Lunch Program**! With nutritious, balanced meals prepared daily, the program ensures students have the energy and focus they need to succeed in the classroom and beyond. The School Lunch Program is designed to provide accessible, affordable, and appealing meals that feature a variety of foods from all food groups, following Canada's Food Guide. By participating, families can help their children develop lifelong healthy habits while making mornings a little less hectic.

Together, we can make small changes that lead to healthier futures for our families and communities.

Responding to Technology-Facilitated Harms Among Young People

Unplugged Canada is hosting a free community event at the Canada Games Centre on Thursday March 5 at 7 p.m., available both in person and virtually. Join to learn from Dr. Alexa Dodge, Assistant Professor of Criminology at Saint Mary's University and a leading Canadian researcher on technology-facilitated sexual violence.

This session will explore cyberbullying, the sharing of intimate images, and other online harms youth face, along with research on the support and responses young people need when problems arise online. This presentation will be valuable for any caregiver or adult supporting young people as they navigate the challenges of their digital social lives.

Thursday, March 5, 2026, at 7 p.m.

Canada Games Centre Boardroom - 26 Thomas Raddall Drive, Halifax

Please register for in-person or virtual [here](#).

Safer Internet Day 2026: Navigating the Internet Safely

As our kids and teens spend more time exploring, creating, and learning online, it's natural to wonder how we can best support them — especially with emerging technologies like artificial intelligence becoming part of their digital world. On Safer Internet Day 2026, Google shared helpful updates and tools designed to make it easier for families to guide, protect, and empower young people as they navigate the Internet safely. Learn more [here](#).

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 (\$875)
- 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

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.

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](#).

Portland Estates PTO Children's Consignment Sale

Saturday April 25, 2026

10 am - 1pm

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

Admission: \$2



SUMMER PROGRAMS 2026

**AS MANY AS POSSIBLE
FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE
IN THE BEST ENVIRONMENT POSSIBLE**

ABOUT UNITED DFC

United DFC is the community soccer club serving Cole Harbour, Dartmouth and Eastern Passage. We offer programs for all ages, at all levels of play and experience. We focus on team building, player development and creating a positive experience for our members.

VISIT UDFC.CA

Check out the PROGRAMS tab on the main menu. This will show all programs by birth year

NEW MEMBERS WELCOME!

SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE

- Tiny Tots U2-4
- Active Start U5-6
- Fundamentals U7-9
- Skill Center U7-11
- Community (Rec) U11-18
- Day Camps
- Quiet Soccer
- Rising Leader Coach Initiative for young coaches
- Performance U12-18
- Adult Performance
- Adult Recreational
- Adult Beginner
- Unified Soccer
- Performance Camps
- Goal Keeper Training

FOR MORE INFO VISIT:

UDFC.CA

SCAN TO REGISTER



CONTACT US

902-404-8332

info@udfc.ca

75 MacDonald Ave, Unit 4, Burnside