Portland Estates Elementary School

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November 2026

NOVEMBER 2026 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 the PTO Holiday event on Saturday November 28.

Our Remembrance Day Assembly will take place on Tuesday, November 10 at 1:30pm 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 20th, 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 Colors Day, Assessment & Evaluation Day. Parent/Teacher interviews will take place on December 3rd & 4th and reports will be sent out through Edupost on November 30. 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 1:30pm

November 11, 2024- Remembrance Day -- No School

November 12- PTO meeting 7pm – PEES Library – All welcome!

November 19- Learning Disabilities Parent Workshop 6:30pm

November 13-19- Transgender Awareness Week

November 20 – Assessment & Evaluation Day – No school for students

November 24 – School Colours Day – Wear your PEES gear, the colour Blue or your favourite team apparel

November 28- PTO Holiday Event – 10:30 am

November 30 – Progress reports sent home through Edupost

December 1-3- Book Fair

December 3- Parent- Teacher interviews 5:30-7:30pm

December 4 -PD Day/Parent-Teacher interviews 1- 3pm (No school for students)

From the School Counsellor, Dr. Renu Da Silva:

Supporting Student Well-Being: The School Counsellor has been introducing their role to every classroom and sharing how they support students' academic, social, and emotional well-being at school. Counselling provides a safe, supportive and welcoming space for children to understand their feelings, build coping skills, strengthen confidence, develop healthy relationships and nurture their overall well-being. Counselling is a collaborative process, and we welcome parents and caregivers to reach out with questions, share concerns or learn more about the support available at school. Together, we can help every child feel heard, understood, supported and valued.

Zones of Feelings and My Coping Toolbox: In October, students participated in a lesson exploring how colours can help them recognise and express their feelings as they continue to develop their emotional vocabulary. They learned that all feelings are okay and that each feeling carries a message. Students also explored and practised choosing healthy coping strategies to help manage their feelings and make helpful choices at school. Families are encouraged to talk with their children about their "*My Feelings Toolbox"* slips and explore the strategies they can practise at home and school. These conversations help build emotional awareness, independence, and confidence.

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. Please contact the principal if you are interested in knowing more about the SAC.

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. Please help our Lost and Found pile shrink by labelling all bedlongings.

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)

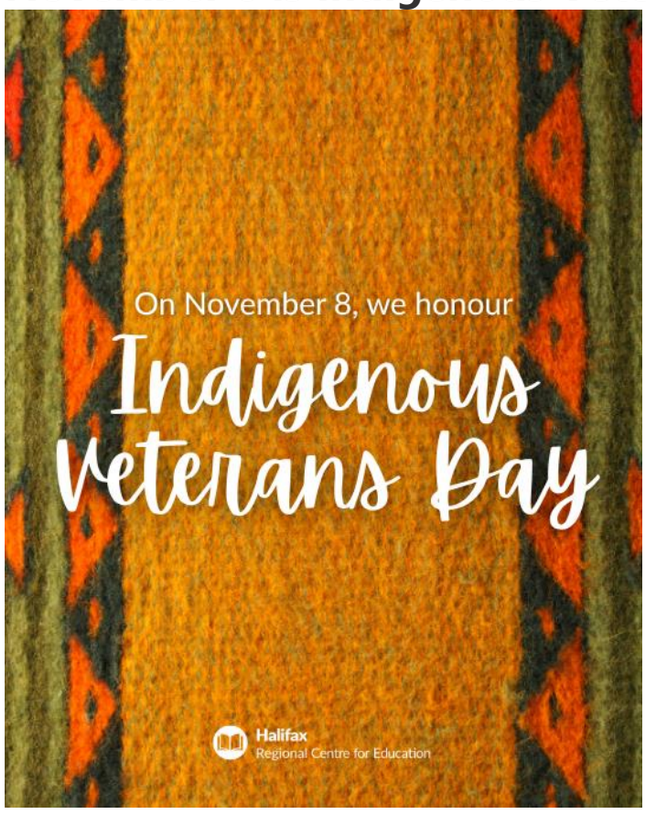
3. Standards for Effective Homework

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



On November 8, we recognize Indigenous Veterans Day and honour the First Nations, Inuit and Métis people who have served and continue to serve in the Canadian Armed Forces. Indigenous veterans have made significant contributions to Canada's military history, serving with courage and dedication while often facing discrimination and barriers to recognition when they returned home.

This day is an opportunity to learn about their stories, recognize their sacrifices and reflect on the importance of ensuring their contributions are remembered and honoured.

We encourage families to take a moment to learn about Indigenous veterans and share their stories with the next generation. Learn more here.

November 11 is Remembrance Day



Each year on November 11, people across Canada pause at the 11th hour to remember. The poppy we wear, the silence we observe and the stories we share are ways of keeping the memory of those who served, those who never returned home, and the lasting impact of war alive for future generations.

Happy Diwali

Diwali, also known as the Festival of Lights, is celebrated by millions of people around the world, including Hindus, Sikhs, Jains and some Buddhists. The celebration carries different meanings across traditions, but often centres on themes of light overcoming darkness, good overcoming evil, and hope, renewal and new beginnings.



Celebrations may include lighting diyas (small oil lamps), decorating homes, sharing special foods, exchanging gifts and gathering with family and friends. Diwali is an opportunity to learn about the diverse traditions and cultures represented in our school communities and to celebrate the many ways people find meaning, connection and joy.

We wish all those celebrating a happy Diwali!

November 13-19 is Transgender Awareness Week

Transgender Awareness Week is an opportunity to reflect on how kindness, inclusivity and understanding help create welcoming school communities where everyone feels they belong. Taking time to learn about experiences different from our own, listening with an open mind and treating others with respect can make a meaningful difference in someone's day and sense of belonging.

Families can help reinforce these values by encouraging children to lead with kindness, embrace differences and recognize that everyone deserves to be treated with dignity and compassion. Together, we can help create school communities where every student feels welcome, valued and supported.

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
- Non-bussed 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.

Free screening of “Your Attention Please”

Join Unplugged Canada’s Nova Scotia Chapter for a FREE screening of the documentary "Your Attention Please" on December 3, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in the White Spruce Room at Keshen Goodman Library.

Parents, caregivers and educators are invited to watch this thought-provoking documentary about the impact of technology on our attention, and come together for a discussion on how we navigate this with youth in our own community. Please register in advance as tickets are limited.

Event: FREE screening of Your Attention Please
Date: December 3, 2026
Time: 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.
Location: White Spruce Room, Keshen Goodman Library
Cost: FREE
Register: https://yourattentionpleaseNS.eventbrite.ca