

Portland Estates Elementary

Mrs. L. Henman-Poirier, Principal
Mrs. D. Haase MacLeod, Vice Principal
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December 2019

December Newsletter

As we enter into the Holiday season, it is a great time to reflect on relationships with family and friends, and what we can do to make the spirit of the season last throughout the year. The staff and students will be involved in activities called the **Fifteen Days of December**. An outline of themes and special days has been sent home. We encourage families to take a few minutes and participate in the activities outlined for each day. The activities take very little time but the reward of families spending quality time together is invaluable.

May all the Portland Estates Elementary school families and friends have a very peaceful and relaxing Holiday season!

Things to do this month:

- Participate in 15 Days of December
- Send back your report card sheet and envelope
- Attend the Holiday Concerts on Dec 16 or 17

Important Dates to Remember:

December 20 – Last day of school before Holiday Break

January 6 – First Day of Classes after the Break



Guidelines for School and/or Bus Cancellation Due to Inclement Weather

Inclement Weather

The Halifax Regional Centre for Education takes great care when making the decision to cancel schools and/or busses in the event of severe or inclement weather. Decisions on school closures and/or bus cancellations are posted on the regional centre's website at www.hrce.ca, on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS), recorded at 902-464-INFO (4636) and communicated to all local radio stations. Families can also receive notice of school and bus cancellations by e-mail or text message by following the link on the front page (left side) of the HRCE website. The weather in Nova Scotia is unpredictable so it's always a good idea for families to have a back-up plan for child care when school is cancelled. To learn more about the process on how decisions regarding closures and cancellations are made, visit: <https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/inclement-weather>.

Delayed Opening due to Inclement Weather

If weather conditions warrant, the Halifax Regional Centre for Education could implement a delayed opening. Delayed openings would be considered when a severe weather event has concluded but snow clearing or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the physical plant is experiencing an issue such as a power outage or loss of water and additional time is required to prepare the school to open. If this was to occur, school would be delayed by two hours. In our school, this means school would start at 11:00 am. If Stock Transportation is operating, the expectation will be that students are picked up two hours later than their regularly assigned time pending any weather-related delays. Our lunch, afternoon schedule and dismissal times will remain at their regularly scheduled times. The Excel program will be cancelled for the morning only.

Volunteering If you anticipate that you would like to volunteer at Portland Estates Elementary School, it will be necessary to have a **criminal record (with vulnerable sector check) from the HRM Police** or the **RCMP & child abuse registry from Department of Community Services** on file at the school. This process can sometimes take a number of weeks to complete therefore it is always a good idea to start the process early. Please contact the office for more information.

Custody and Access Policy

The HRCE supports the documented decisions of courts in matters relating to custody and access. The HRCE is committed to ensuring the legal custody and access rights of parents. **Parents/guardians have a responsibility to share all court decisions related to custody and access.** This should be provided with your registration. Generally, there will be one parent-teacher interview per child scheduled during the reporting period to which parents/guardians are invited. Requests for parent-teacher interviews by a non-custodial parent will be accommodated by contacting the principal at 902-433-7100.

SAFETY CONCERNS

We encourage students not to walk through the parking lot where staff park their cars because of vehicles and the special needs school bus driving in and out. Please encourage your child to use the sidewalks when coming to and leaving the school building.

We recognize that parking at the school can be challenging. If you must drive your child to school please park your vehicle in the bus parking spots which are to the right of the driveway opposite to the staff parking lot exit so as not to impede the flow of traffic. This is a safe area to drop children off so they can walk to the school grounds on the sidewalk. Please watch carefully before and after school for those children walking or being dropped off, running to and from the playground area.

There is to be **no parking or stopping** in the Fire Lane which is the majority of the driveway. This area is marked by pylons – please do not stop or park beside these pylons. As well, it is important that we allow room for the special needs bus to drive through.

There should be no parking in the Staff parking area as well. A number of our staff (School psychologists, Speech Language pathologists, APSEA teachers, EAL teachers etc) are itinerant and need to move from school to school in a timely manner.

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 (433-7100). A pamphlet has been posted on the school's website as a resource for parents. We invite you to have a look.

The **HRCE Head Lice Policy** 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

Valuables and Electronics

Unless given special permission, students are not to have cell phones or electronic devices out during school hours. Portland Estates School is not responsible for lost or stolen valuables, including personal music devices, i-phones, personal gaming devices, etc. We would encourage students to leave these items at home where they are safe. This also holds true for toys. If your child has toys that are very special to them, please encourage them to leave them home where they can stay safe.

The Portland Estates Staff wishes all our families and friends a very Happy and relaxing Holiday Season!

