

Portland Estates Elementary School

45 Portland Hills Drive

Dartmouth, NS

March 2022

It has been an eventful winter here at Portland Estates Elementary School. 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, Snowperson building competitions, Yearbook Cover design contests, African Heritage presentations and more!

I would like to thank the staff, parents and students for their ongoing support and cooperation as we continue to navigate changes during Covid.

We wish all the Portland Estates families - a great holiday over the March Break.

Mrs. Henman-Poirier

Important Upcoming Dates:

March 8- International Women's Day

March 11- Wear Your PJs, Bring a stuffy and something Green

March 14-18 – March Break

March 23 – Assessment & Evaluation Day – No school for students

March 25- Spring Hat Day



March is Nutrition Awareness Month: Why do I have to eat my broccoli? I hate vegetables! You've probably heard these before. Almost half of all Canadians say that eating a balanced diet is challenging for them because they are so busy. Teaching children the importance of eating all the food groups can be a challenge but we will focus on this during our health lessons. Portland Estates has applied for and was lucky enough to receive a Big Crunch Grant so we will be providing some crunchy apples and vegetables to our students a few times this month.

BOOKS!

A massive thank you to the PTO for all their fundraising efforts this year to put more books into the classrooms. The school and classrooms have all received an infusion of books. We have purchased a lot of culturally rich books which are representative of the diversity we have at our school.

Substitutes Needed!! No Bachelor of Education required!

Were you aware that there is a substitute teacher shortage in Nova Scotia? At least two days per week, our Guidance counsellor, Ms. Healy, and our Resource teacher, Mrs. Connors, usually must cover in Homeroom classes as we do not have substitute teachers. The DEECD and HRCE are hiring non-licensed substitute teachers to help with this shortage. If you know of someone who has a university degree and would be interested in substituting, please have them email their resume to Mrs. Henman-Poirier at Portland Estates. If selected, they must have a Criminal Records check and Child Abuse check completed as well.

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!

Safe Arrival

Please remember to call the Safe Arrival Line if your child is absent or going to be late. The Safe Arrival Line can be accessed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. If you know the day before that your child will be absent from school, please telephone the school office at 902-433-7100 ext 1. Thank you for your continued cooperation in keeping our students safe.

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. To improve student achievement in Literacy.
2. To improve student achievement in Mathematics.
3. To improve the well-being of the students at Portland Estates Elementary.

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.

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 2022. Is your child turning four or five before December 2022? If so, it's time to register them for Primary or Pre-primary!

OUTDOOR CLOTHING Please remember to dress warmly for the cold winter weather. Parents, please remind your child of the importance of wearing proper winter 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.

Screen-free week: activities to get children moving this March Break! Over the March Break, many children are tempted to stay indoors in front of a screen – playing video games, on their smartphones or watching television. But, this one-week break can be the perfect opportunity to get children moving! According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the average child aged 8-18 spends 7.5 hours on a device or screen every single day. That's 114 days glued to a screen each year! Sedentary behaviour has implications for both physical and mental health, including increased risk of obesity, developing a chronic disease (such as Type 2 diabetes) and mental health issues. Experts agree that kids should be engaging in 60 minutes of heart-pumping physical activity every single day. March Break is the perfect opportunity to get children off their screens and moving! Here are some ideas to keep your children active and having fun this March Break:

Enjoy the great outdoors - Breathe in some fresh winter air as you explore your local trails, parks, and toboggan and cross country ski or skate at the Oval.

Visit a local museum -March Break is a great time to learn something new. Local museums are rich with history, fun facts and exciting ideas. And, the good news is, you'll spend the day walking and exercising! It's a great opportunity to get some exercise and burn off some energy! The Nova Scotia Museum of Natural History has a Mastodon display this year.

March Break is the perfect opportunity to create healthy habits for the entire family.

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!

Community News:

Dartmouth Little League Registration opens on March 1 – go to the website:

Dartmouthlittleleague.net/