

Ian Forsyth Elementary School Newsletter

Where Everyone Is A Star!



November 2024

Ian Forsyth Elementary School

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Important Dates to Note

November

- 4 to 8 - Fire Drill week – lunchtime fire drill
- 5 - Virtual SAC meeting 5:30
- 5 - Virtual H&S meeting 6:30
- 8 - Remembrance Day assembly
- 8 - School clothing order closes (through school cash)
- 11 - Remembrance Day
- 18 - 50/50 Fundraiser begins
- 22 - Assessment and Evaluation Day - no classes
- 26 - Strings and Band concert at IFES 5:30
- 28 - Reports emailed home by 4pm
- 29 - On-line milk order for term 2 open

December

- 3 - Holiday Concert - Woodlawn High doors open at 5:30
- 5 - Professional Learning morning no school for students
- 5 - Parent/Teacher 1 to 6 (more information to follow)
- 6 - 50/50 Draw - 3pm
- 9 - On-line milk order closes
- 11 - Term Two milk order begins
- 16 - Set-up for Christmas Bazaar
- 17 - Christmas Bazaar
- 20 - Last day of school before Christmas

Message from Principal

As we enter November, we embrace a month of reflection and gratitude. This is a wonderful time to appreciate our community, the hard work of our students, and the support from our families. We have exciting events planned, including a lunch time fire drill, SAC and H&S meetings, school clothing orders finalized, Remembrance Day assembly, and activities to foster collaboration and learning.

Thank you to St. Vincent de Paul Society, Knights of Columbus, and Genny and Ed Hussey for sharing the cost of treats with our school during our Halloween festivities. As well, the Knights of Columbus have donated 12 new winter coats for students in our school. If your child requires a new winter coat, please contact Ms. Yerxa to see if we have one in their size. Shilo Community Church has been donating food for our students about once a month since last year. It is wonderful to have so many members of the greater community that support our students and school. We want to acknowledge and thank them all.

Thank you for your continued support and involvement in our school.

Angela Yerxa-Weeks - Principal

Remembrance Day & Indigenous Veterans Day

In Canada November 8th is Indigenous Veterans Day. On November 8th, we honour Indigenous Veterans who have served in missions in times of war and peace. While not often enough acknowledged, the military service of First Nations, Inuit and Métis in Canada has deep roots.

At IFES, on November 8th we will be holding a school-wide assembly at 10:45 to honour our veterans. On November 11th, we are asked to pause and reflect on the sacrifice of our veterans, past and present. Lest we forget.

Transgender Awareness Week

Observed annually from November 13-19, Transgender Awareness Week provides an opportunity to raise

awareness and acknowledge the positive contributions made daily by members of the transgender community.

Be an ally - An ally is someone who actively and consistently supports, stands with and advocates for the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities. The best way to be an ally is to listen with an open mind. It is our responsibility to treat all people with dignity and kindness.

Results from Grade 3 Assessment May 2024

The results from last years provincial grade 3 assessment have been sent home. As well, individual student reports are accessible by parents on the PowerSchool Student-Parent Portal. Any specific questions regarding how you can work with your child's classroom teacher to support student learning should be directed to the classroom teacher.

NS School Lunch Program

It has been an exciting start to the roll out of our NS School Lunch Program. Many students are enjoying healthy meals prepared by an outside provider during lunch time. We are still solidifying our routine at school to distribute the 200+ meals arriving each day. If you are looking for details on the program, please review the [FAQ at nslunch.ca](#). If anyone is looking to provide feedback, they are welcome to send a message to lunch@hrce.ca

Expectations for Students on the School Bus

All students who ride on the school bus **must** be registered for that bus. Parents should check the Bus Planner website to ensure that their child is registered. <https://hrcetransportation.mybusplanner.ca/Login?ReturnUrl=%2Fsubscriptions%2FLogin.aspx>

It is expected that families understand, and students follow the specific safety procedures listed below. We are requesting that adults review the following safety rules with their children who ride the school bus.

Students with repeated challenges of being safe while waiting for the bus, riding the bus, or debarking from the bus will be suspended from using the school bus for a period of time.

Bus Stop Safety

- Be on time for the bus, and don't run to/from the bus.

- Stand back off the road and don't push or shove when waiting at a stop.
- Always cross in front of the bus, walk 3 meters (10 ft) in front of the bus to a point where you can see the driver; wait for the driver's signal to cross. Proceed to the centre of the road, STOP, LOOK & LISTEN and cross the road when it is safe.
- Never crawl under a school bus or cross the road behind the bus.
- Know the danger zones around the bus.

School Bus Safety

- Please respect and listen to the driver and avoid distracting them.
- Stay in your assigned seat
- Keep noise levels to a minimum.
- Do not stand or move while the bus is in motion.
- Never put your hands, arms, feet or head out of the bus window.
- Ask the driver for permission before you open the bus windows.
- Do not throw anything inside the bus or out of the windows.
- Keep the aisle clear at all times when the bus is in motion.
- Large items that cannot be placed safely on a student's lap may not be taken on the school bus.
- The driver will report misconduct and vandalism to the school.

Please note: Musical instruments that cannot be held safely on a child's lap may not be transported on the school bus. Please refer to the attached guidelines for transporting items on a school bus.

Parent/Teacher Interviews

Our first parent-teacher conference will take place on Thursday December 5th from 1:00 to 6:00 pm. Parents may request in-person appointments or phone calls.

This year we will be using an on-line self-serve booking service to make appointments. More information on booking appointment times will be sent home next week.

Holiday Concert - December 3rd

This year, we will be holding a holiday concert. As we have done in the past, the concert will be held at Woodlawn High School. Please save the date Tuesday December 3rd. Doors will open at 5:30pm. The concert

will begin at 6:00pm. All are welcome to attend. We will have a silver collection at the door to help cover the costs of renting the auditorium and the audio-visual equipment for the concert.

Students may be dropped off at 5:30 in their designated classroom at the high school, however **there must be one guardian at Woodlawn High for the entire time your children are in attendance.** We will be sending a labeled map of class locations home closer to the concert date.

We encourage parents to have a conversation with their students before the concert about the importance of respecting the classrooms while waiting for their performance. Last year, we noticed some challenges with students handling classroom materials and behaviour in the restrooms. The principal of Woodlawn High reached out to emphasize that treating the school with care is essential for us to be able to continue to hold our concerts there. We appreciate your support in fostering a positive environment for everyone involved!

Strings and Band Concert - November 26

We will be hosting a Strings and Band concert in the gym at IFES on Tuesday November 26th from 5:30 to 6:30. Please note that doors open at 5:30 and we are hoping to begin the concert as soon as everyone is organized. Student will report to the gym where their strings or band instructor will organize them in concert formation. Parents will remain in the gym with their children.

Arrival Time / Safe Arrival

Please remember supervision does not begin until 8:35 when teachers are on duty in their classrooms. Your children should not arrive at school before that time.

On days when your child will be late or absent, please be sure to let us know. One of our greatest priorities is ensuring that all our students arrive safely at school each day. Our school is continuing to use a new system to report absences through SchoolMessenger. You can report future absences using an app, website, or toll-free phone number. **Any time your student is absent (or late after 8:45) and the absence has not been reported in advance, you will receive notifications via email, text, and phone calls from SchoolMessenger.** If SchoolMessenger cannot reach you, office staff will follow up.

To report your student absences, any of the following methods can be used:

PowerSchool Parent/Student Portal

Parents/guardians can log in to <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/> to access the SchoolMessenger website to report future absences.

SchoolMessenger App

Parents/guardians can download the SchoolMessenger app for Android and iOS devices and use their username and password for the PowerSchool Portal.

Toll-Free Number

Parents/guardians can call 1-833-582-6940 to report future absences using an automated system.

On-line Updating of Student Information

This year families have been asked to verify student information on Power School via the Parent Portal. Please log on to your PS Parent Portal as soon as possible to verify your information. It is important that we can contact you at an accurate number if necessary. If you are having difficulty doing this, please contact Ms. Hannaby, our school admin assistant, for help.

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

Please refer to the attached guidelines for headlice.

Lost and Found

Please be reminded that we empty the Lost and Found at the end of every month. Please remind your children to look for any missing items. It also would be very

helpful if families are able to put labels on students' belongings (especially expensive items like coats and snow pants). There is no way that school staff are able to track student belongings. We thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

Home & School Fall 2024 - 50/50 Fundraiser

After the success of last two 50/50 draws, we have decided to hold this fundraising event again this year. We will be using Rafflebox to sell and track tickets. Next week, we will provide all necessary information and the link.

Funds raised through the 50/50 draw will be split 50/50 between the lucky winner and the school. Tickets will be available on Rafflebox starting Monday November 18th.

The draw date will be Friday December 6th at 3pm. The winner will be contacted by phone or email.

The school proceeds will be used to help fund extra-curricular activities and experiences for our students. **The class with the most sales wins a pizza party!** When you purchase your tickets, be sure to select a class to support.

Look for the notice coming home from the Home and School next week.

School Advisory Council

Please join me in welcoming the current members of our SAC:

Parent Members: Krista Hetherington Duffy (chair), Melanie Smiley, Cait Green

Staff Members: Jenna Hawkins (Teacher), Meghan Conrad (Teacher), Tracey Johnson, (VP/Teacher), Angela Yerxa-Weeks (Principal)

Community Members: Tammy Mahar, Patricia MacDougall, TBA

We are actively looking for one additional community members to complete our membership. If any parents are interested, please email Ms. Yerxa-Weeks directly; ayerxa@hrce.ca

School and Bus Cancellation - 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 buses 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:**

- Bused 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 our website www.hrce.ca
- On X (formerly Twitter) at [Twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS)
- On Instagram at www.instagram.com/hrce_ns/

It's important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit hrce.ca/weather.

We are in the **Woodlawn High School Family of Schools**. Please listen and or look for either the *Family* name or the individual name of the school in all announcements.

Delayed Opening of Schools

In the event of a delayed opening the following will apply:

- School opening will be delayed 2 hours
- Ian Forsyth Elementary would open at 10:35 am
- School bus pick up times will be delayed 2 hours
- At schools that have Excel, the program will be delayed opening by 2 hours
- Each school will alter morning schedules to best address their timetables
- Lunch times will not change
- Afternoon class schedules will not change
- Dismissal time will not change

Mid-Day School Closure

In the event of mid-day closure due to deteriorating weather, you will be informed on local radio stations as close to 11:00 a.m. as possible. Staff will contact parents (or the person you have previously indicated) via the phone number recorded on in PowerSchool. It is essential that we are able to reach you in the event of a school closure during the day. If your child is transported on an HRCE school bus, those busses will be departing from school two hours earlier than normal on mid-day closure days. Therefore, school busses will depart Ian Forsyth at 12:35 in the case of a mid-day closure. Due to changing weather conditions some busses may be delayed.

Please note that at the elementary level we need to contact parents directly before we dismiss students to walk or take a bus. If the classroom teacher is unable to reach a parent or designate of a particular child, that child will remain at school until contact with a parent or guardian is made.

Community Organizations and Christmas Help

211 Nova Scotia has information on holiday support programs across Nova Scotia on their website at www.ns.211.ca/holiday. If you are unable to find support in your area through the website or do not have access to internet/computer, please reach out to 211 by dialing 2-1-1 or 1-855-466-4994. They can be reached by phone 24/7. 211 is also available through website-based chat or by texting 2-1-1, Monday to Friday, 9am-4pm.

Christmas Daddies

Christmas Daddies helps Maritime families in need at Christmas time by providing toys to families with children. The Salvation Army is our partner for the distribution of toys and gifts. You must register to be on the list. Please contact your local Salvation Army to register or call 902 455 1201 to inquire on a location in

your area to register. The registration process typically begins in November each year. Registration deadline is December 6. To register in Halifax, Dartmouth, Bedford or Sackville

<https://salvationarmy.ca/maritime/home/christmas/hrm/>

Salvation Army- Dartmouth

General Inquiries: 902-466-6176

Ask for Family Services

NS Home Heating Assistance Rebate

The Heating Assistance Rebate Program helps low-income Nova Scotians with the cost of home heating. Rebates range from \$100 to \$200. You can apply until 31 March 2023. You can receive up to \$200 if you qualify.

<https://beta.novascotia.ca/apply-heating-assistance-rebate-heating-assistance-rebate-program>

Phone: 902-424-5200

Toll-free: 1-800-670-4357