

Ian Forsyth Elementary School Newsletter



Where Everyone Is A Star!

September 2024

Ian Forsyth Elementary School

22 Glencoe Drive
Dartmouth, NS
B2X 1J1

Phone: (902) 435-8435

Safe Arrival:(902) **435-8333**

Fax: (902) 435-8365

E-mail: ifes@hrce.ca

Website: <https://ifs.hrce.ca/>

Message from Principal

Welcome back to another school year. September will be a month making adjustments so that our school day runs as smoothly as possible and allows us all to maximize learning opportunities.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me via our main line 902-435-8435 or by email ayerxa@hrce.ca

We are looking forward to a great year!

Angela Yerxa-Weeks - (ps - I go by Ms. Yerxa)

Important Dates to Note

September

- 7 - Pizza order **opens**
- 10 - First fire drill
- 12 - Stand Up Against Bullying - wear pink
- 12 - Pizza order **closes**
- 13 - Milk order **opens**
- 17 - Lockdown drill
- 19 - Milk order **closes**
- 20 - Classroom teachers to send home *Class Plan for Communicating Student Learning*
- 21 - Fall Fun Fest 10:30 to 12:30
- 23 - Milk program begins
- 24 - Hold and Secure Drill
- 26 - School Photos - **No family photos**
- 27 - Orange Shirt Day (recognized at IFES)
- 27 - School-wide Terry Fox Walk
- 30 - Truth and Reconciliation Day - No school

October

- 1 - Treaty Day (school day)
- Week of Oct 7 - Fire Drill #2
- 8 - First SAC meeting - virtual 5:30
- 8 - First Home & School - virtual - 6:35
- 11 - Professional Learning Day - No school for students
- 14 - Thanksgiving Holiday - no school
- 24 - Halloween Dance
- 25 - NSTU Conference Day - No school for students
- 28 - 1st day of School Lunch Program

Physical Education Reminder

Sneakers are the safest option for students when they are participating in phys. ed classes. Crocs, sandals, and any loose-fitting footwear become a safety hazard for students. If you can, please have your child bring sneakers to wear on the days they have Phys. Ed in their schedule. If needed, students can borrow from our used sneaker stash in the gym.

Provincial School Lunch Program

The Provincial School Lunch Program will launch at IFES on Monday October 28. The ordering window for the first order will be between October 18 and October 23. All ordering will be done on-line. As information is released, it is being shared with parents via emails from HRCE. Please watch for more information in the upcoming weeks.

SchoolCash Online

HRCE uses an on-line system that allows families to make payments electronically. From lunch orders to school trip fees, you will be able to make all payments safely, securely, and quickly through SchoolCash Online.

Our school will post items for purchase and assign school fees relevant to your child. You can make all purchases and payments from your phone, tablet or computer.

If you have not already done so, please register as soon as possible. It's free and takes less than two minutes. When you create an account, you will receive an email once items are posted for purchase.

Visit <https://hrce.schoolcashionline.com/> and click Register to get started.

Need support? Connect with the SchoolCash Online help desk at [schoolcashionline.com/Home/Support](https://hrce.schoolcashionline.com/Home/Support)

IFES School Advisory Council

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

Parent Members: Cait Greene, Melanie Smiley, TBA

Staff Members: TBA (Teacher), TBA (Teacher), Tracey Johnson (VP/Teacher), Angela Yerxa-Weeks (Principal)

Community Members: Tammy Mahar, TBA, TBA

We do require one parent, two teacher, and two community member spots to be filled to complete our council. If you are interested in joining SAC please send an email to the school ifes@hrce.ca We would really like names to be put forward by Friday September 20th. If we have more individuals interested than we have space for, we will hold an election to determine our new SAC members.

Pre-Primary and School Events

There have been some questions around how pre-primary students are integrated into the events we have at school. On days when school staff are engaged in PD, there will be no pre-primary program those days. As well, all school holidays are observed in pre-primary.

Any curriculum-based events (curriculum evening, parent/teacher...) are not pre-primary events as there is no curriculum being followed for those students. If you have any questions or concerns your lead ECE is available via email.

Pre-Primaries are welcome to participate in other school events such as Home and School events, hot lunch and the milk program. If you ever have questions about participation, please call our main line 902-435-8435 to inquire.

Picking Up Students from School

We would like all student pickups will continue to take place outside. If you are picking up students from school at dismissal time, please meet them at their regular entrance doors.

If you are picking up students outside of dismissal time, please follow the directions below:

- Call the school when you are on your way to the school to let them know who you are picking up and what class they are in. 902-435-8435
- Buzz the doorbell when you arrive.
- Your child will be brought to you at the front door.

Picking up from pre-primary, you must knock on the door of the appropriate pre-primary class.

Water Filling Stations

We have water refill stations in each hallway. **Please have your children bring water bottles to fill. We do not have a supply of cups for students to use.** Students should bring their own labelled water bottles. If students do not bring a water bottle, they will not have anything to drink water out of.

Allergy Alerts / Medication

Please keep in mind we have numerous students and staff with severe allergies to food and scents. Please refrain from wearing scents when in our school and be diligent about the food items your child brings to school. **Nut products cannot be sent to school.**

If your child requires medication to be given during school time, an "Administration of Medication" form must be filled out and on file in the main office. All medicine is kept secured and distributed from the main office. Medications are required to be in the original container and clearly labelled for your child.

If your child has a **severe or life-threatening allergy or medical condition**, families must complete a Life-Threatening Allergies form to ensure all necessary staff members have access to this information. It is also important that you call the school to obtain the appropriate medical forms. This is important to ensure all staff is aware of any conditions or allergies so they can respond appropriately in the case of an emergency. You must complete a form indicating appropriate medical care for your child.

If your child requires an Epi Pen, they **must** wear their Epi Pen on their person. If you decide that you do not want your child to wear the Epi Pen, it can be left in the office but you must complete signed documentation and submit it to the principal in September of each year. If you want

to send in a second Epi Pen, it can be left in the main school office.

If you require a Medic Alert bracelet, Medic Alert will provide children between the ages of 4 and 14 with a free medic alert bracelet, please call the school and ask for a pamphlet.

Hot Lunch - Pizza Tuesdays

In order to bridge the gap until the School Lunch Program begins, we have decided to organize pizza lunch for students on **Tuesdays** until the program begins. The orders will be collected once a month. Students must order for the entire month. We cannot accommodate partial orders. We also will not accept any late orders.

All orders are made using our on-line ordering system through School Cash Online.

Each pizza will cost \$4. There will be an option for families to purchase pizza for students who may need assistance purchasing hot lunch. Last year that went a long way to ensure that all students who wanted hot lunch received it. Many thanks to our generous community who thinks about ALL the students who attend our school.

If your child is absent on Little Caesar day, their order will be kept for one day. Students can pick their pizza from the main office the following day. Because Little Caesars pizzas are pre-ordered, we are unable to reimburse or carry over Little Caesar orders if students are absent. If school is **cancelled** on a pizza Tuesday, the cost of your order for that day will be refunded, in the manner in which it was paid. These refunds **only** apply to school cancellations as we are permitted to cancel that order with Little Caesars.

Ordering Dates - on-line orders open on September 7th and close on September 12th. **Please be reminded that no late orders will be accepted. This is not part of the School Lunch Program. There is a cost associated with ordering. If you require assistance paying for the pizza, please contact Ms. Yerxa.**

School Photos

This year, school photos will be taken by Adams Photography. Our photo day will be on Thursday September 26th. Retake date is October 23. We want to let

you know in advance that we **will not** be taking family photos this year.

Safe Arrival

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 are able to 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.

Moving forward, 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.

All three methods are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Absences can be reported at any time before the start of school on the day the student will be absent. Up to five consecutive absences can be recorded at once.

Please visit <https://www.hrce.ca/SafeArrival> for more information.

Lost and Found

Just a reminder to have your child(ren) take any of their lost items from the Lost and Found each week. Once a month, we will be donating all items in the Lost and Found to charity. We do not have the space and capacity to keep lost and found items for long periods of time. Please have your child(ren) check the lost and found on a regular basis. It is also important that your child's name is written

on their clothing. As we go through the lost and found items for donation, we do check for student names.

Arrival and School Bell Times

Please note: at 8:35 inside supervision begins and students can begin to enter the building; instruction begins at 8:45 and all students should be at school by that time; ALL grades dismiss for the day at 2:35pm. **Students may not be on school grounds before 8:35am.**

Our bells indicate the start of the school day at 8:45 and the end of the school day at 2:35. We have no other bells during the school day.

It is extremely important that families make arrangements to pick up students at 2:35. We do not have supervision for students after the 2:35 bell.

Registration Forms & Parent Contact Information

It is extremely important that all families have a Power School account to verify and confirm the information contained in your child's electronic file. Families will be asked to verify and update their child's electronic file each year. We will be sending more information about how to do this later on this month.

If you have already registered for the Powerschool Parent Portal, that's awesome! If you are new to Powerschool or have forgotten your password, please use the link below to get started.

<https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/>

https://sis.hrce.ca/powerschool_for_parents/index.html#/

Terry Fox Walk

WHEN: This year our Terry Fox activities to support cancer research and awareness will take place on September 27th. Classes will learn about Terry's marathon of hope in age appropriate ways and participate in a walk/jog on the field in honour of Terry.

DONATIONS: We are not accepting donations at school this year. We ask that anyone interested in donating do so on-line. If you wish to **donate online**, Income Tax receipts will be issued by the Terry Fox Donation directly to you by e-mail. Go to [Ian Forsyth School - Dartmouth, NS | Terry Fox School Run](#).

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 second 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.hrsb.ca/our-school>

Communication

Communication is extremely important for our home-school relationship and for the positive development of your child. We strive to work in partnership with families. Sharing what you know of your child helps us provide the most supportive learning environment for him/her. We are happy to answer questions, clarify information and listen to what you have to share.

Please note that calls and emails sent to staff members will be returned within two business days.

Breakfast Basket

We offer a daily breakfast food for students at our school. Please note that we will continue to offer an in-class breakfast basket with healthy food items. Students may enjoy breakfast items including granola bars, yogurt, fresh fruit, and cheese strings directly from their class baskets each morning.

Lockdown Drill

The safety and security of our students and staff is a top priority for ***Ian Forsyth Elementary*** and the Halifax Regional Centre for Education. We implement a number of measures as part of a comprehensive plan aimed at ensuring our school remains a safe place for our students to learn.

One of the procedures our school will be practicing is a lockdown drill. During a lockdown drill, classroom doors are secured, and the students remain inside the room until instructed by the teacher to resume their activities.

All exterior doors are locked, and no one is permitted to enter or leave the building.

Students are kept inside the school and classrooms when circumstances make it safer to stay in the classroom rather than evacuate. Just as we prepare our students to properly respond to a fire drill, they also need to be aware of the proper response during a lockdown drill. These drills should be treated with the same level of importance as fire drills.

Please be assured that staff at our school will spend time discussing the importance of this procedure with students prior to running a drill. We will also take time after the drill to remind them that it was only a practice and there was no danger. When possible, our School Liaison Officer may assist us in conducting the lockdown drills just as the Fire Department assists with evacuation drills from time to time.

Please take the time to speak with your child about this procedure and reinforce its importance. We practice these drills to ensure our school remains a safe place for teaching and learning.

Our first lockdown drill will take place on September 20 sometime before recess. Please contact principal, Angela Yerxa if you have any questions about lockdown drills.

Other School Safety Items

Please help to keep our students safe when dropping off and picking up your children. Here are a few friendly reminders:

- Please do not ever drive on the school grounds when students are present. We have both driveways blocked with pylons from **8:15 to 3:00**. Please do not move the pylons.

- The pylons along both driveways of the school are in place to allow students safe passage on to the school yard. Do not drive past them.

- Parking on the school grounds is limited to staff.

- When parking on the street, please abide by the no-stopping zones on either side of the street. Parking can only take place on side streets or further away from the school. It is especially important to abide by this during drop-off and pick-up times as parking or stopping in front

of the school makes it impossible for school busses to drop-off or pick up students.

- Do not block bus zones or no-stopping zones as indicated by pylons

- Dogs are not permitted on school yard or playgrounds while students are present. We appreciate your cooperation with this!

Emailed Newsletters

We email Monthly newsletters to families. It is extremely important that we have an accurate and working email address for your family. If we do not any school communication will not reach you. **If you do require a paper copy of the newsletter, please contact Ms. Hannaby at the main office and we will provide one.**

Student Lunches

Please be reminded that we are not able to heat lunches for students. It would be very helpful if you could include spoons and forks (where needed) with your children. **We do not have any plastic spoons or forks for students.**

As well, we are limiting the amount of interaction for drop of student lunches. Please try to send a lunch with your child everyday so we are not opening the front door throughout the morning and accepting lunches on a daily basis. We are not accepting **Skip the Dishes** or **Uber Eats** type food delivery for student lunches.

Milk

Milk orders will be available on-line beginning on September 13. We will have three ordering periods: The milk program 1 begins on September 23. Milk orders align (loosely) with school terms. There will be two more ordering periods this year. Families can order per term (\$25) or for a whole year (\$75). The order is due via our on-line School Cash system on Thursday September 19.