

Ian Forsyth Elementary School Newsletter

Where Everyone Is A Star!



November 2023

Ian Forsyth Elementary School

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- 11 - On-line January Pizza order opens
- 12 - Virtual SAC meeting 5:30
- 12 - Virtual H&S meeting 6:30
- 12 - On-line milk order closes
- 13 - Last day of 1st milk order
- 14 - Term Two milk order begins
- 18 - Set-up for Christmas Bazaar
- 19 - Christmas Bazaar
- 19 - On-line January Pizza order closes
- 20 - Last day of school before Christmas
- 20 - On-line R&B order opens
- 28 - On-line R&B order closes



Important Dates to Note

November

- 1 - On-line Pizza order for November closes
- 6 to 10 - Fire Drill week
- 7 - Virtual SAC meeting 5:30
- 7 - In-person H&S meeting 6:30
- 10 - Remembrance Day assembly
- 11 - Remembrance Day
- 13 - In Lieu of Remembrance Day no school
- 17 - Assessment and Evaluation Day - no classes
- 21 - On-line Pizza order for Dec opens
- 21 - Reports emailed home by 4pm
- 22 - On-line R&B Kitchen opens
- 22 - Parent/Teacher 5:30 to 7:30 (more information to follow)
- 23 - Professional Learning am
- 23 - Parent/Teacher 1pm to 4pm
- 29 - On-line Pizza order Dec closes
- 30 - On-line R&B Kitchen order for Dec closes

December

- 4 - Professional Learning Day no school for students
- 5 - On-line milk order for term 2 open
- 5 - Holiday Concert - Woodlawn High doors open at 5:30
- Dec 11 to 15 - School Book Fair

Message from Principal

Welcome to November 2023. We have had a great start to our school year with a lot of learning and social events taking place. Thank you for joining us for our evening school events. Our last three evening events; curriculum Night and social, Fall Fun Fest and our Spooktacular Dance were wonderful community building events.

As always, I like to remind families to send students dressed for the weather. We have already had students complaining of cold weather. It will be important that they have necessary clothing to be outside for recess and lunch. Please ensure that students have hats, mittens, and coats to wear while outside in colder weather.

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. 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.

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 10th we will be holding a school-wide assembly to honour our veterans. On November 11th, we are asked to pause and reflect on the sacrifice of our veterans, past and present. Let's not 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 2022-23

The results from last year's 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.

IFES Equity Team

Last year, several staff members participated in professional development with a member of the HRCE Diversity Team. Otis Daye, HRCE Consultant for Student Equity, spent two full days working with staff to help us develop our own equity team. This year, those team members along with new members, will continue to work with school staff and students to further grow our understanding and support of equity at IFES.

As part of our school improvement plan, our team will help to ensure that all members of our school community are working together to create a safe learning environment for everyone. This will be done in a *"culturally and linguistically responsive, accepting, respectful, and supportive manner that honours all students' cultural identities and values their experiences and world views."*

Please look for a more detailed letter being sent home in the next couple of weeks. We are looking for feedback and input from families and the greater community.

Once you receive our detailed letter, please feel free to communicate with us regarding the equity work we plan to undertake. You can send any emails to ifes@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 Wednesday November 22nd from 5:30 to 7:30pm and November 23rd from 1:00 to 4:00 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.

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.

Water Filling Stations

Several new water filling stations were in August 2021. The drinking water from the filling stations has been tested and is safe to drink. **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.

Student Lunches - No school supply of spoons and forks

We **do not** have a supply of plastic forks and spoons for students. Please ensure that you send any necessary cutlery for your students' lunches. We also are not accepting "Skip the Dishes" type delivery food orders for students.

Home & School Fall 2023 - 50/50 Fundraiser

Due to the success of last year's 50/50 draw, 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 6th.

The draw date will be Thursday December 7th at 3pm. The winner will be contacted by phone or email.

The school proceeds will be used to purchase new reading materials, outdoor play equipment and some technology. **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, TBA, TBA

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

Holiday Concert

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 5th. 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.

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

Feed Nova Scotia

If a family is in receipt of Income Assistance and received a Feed NS slip, the deadline for that support is early November. For those who do not receive Income Assistance, the deadline for the application for support is at the end of November.

Application information is available on the website included below, including an online application.

<https://www.feednovascotia.ca/find-food/find-christmas-support>

Christmas Daddies

Christmas Daddies helps Maritime families in need at Christmastime 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