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# Saint Mary's Elementary School

## February 2025 Newsletter

**Dear SMES Families,**

Welcome to February! Our school continues to grow, and we've welcomed many new students this past month. I'm grateful to be part of such a welcoming and diverse community!

We've reached the midpoint of the school year and are already planning for the next one. Early registration for new Pre-Primary and Primary students begins on **February 3**. If you have or know a child starting school in September 2025, please encourage them to register this month!

February is **African Heritage Month**, and this year's theme is *Legacy in Action: Celebrating Black Brilliance*. While African heritage is woven into our learning year-round, this month allows us to reflect on over 400 years of African history in Nova Scotia.

Looking for ways to celebrate as a family? Check out African Heritage Month events and resources at the [Halifax Public Library](#).

Please continue to reach out any time.

Warmly,

Ms. Johnson

### Important Dates

- **Feb 3:** Early Registration begins (2025-26)
- **Feb 7:** Parks Canada Presentations
- **Feb 10-14:** Lockdown Drill #2
- **Feb 14:** Valentine's Day

- **Feb 17:** Nora Bernard Day (No classes)
- **Feb 20:** Dental Hygienists Floride Program
- **Feb 26:** SAC Meeting @ 7:00 pm
- **Feb 28:** Ramadan begins

## Reminders

### Toys & Personal Items

To minimize distractions and keep the focus on learning, please keep **toys, trading cards (e.g., Pokémon cards), makeup, and stuffed animals** at home. If brought to school, they must stay in backpacks. This helps students focus and prevents loss or damage to special items.

### Pick-Up & Drop-Off

No parking is allowed during drop-off and pick-up. If you wish to accompany your child to their door, please park on the street. Remember to be considerate of fellow parents and community members using the parking lot.

### Nut-Free Policy

Our school is **nut-free**, meaning **no peanuts, tree nuts, or products containing nuts** (including Nutella and certain chocolates) are allowed. Please check labels before sending food.


### Volunteers & Chaperones

If you'd like to volunteer or chaperone a trip, you'll need two documents:

- 1. Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sectors Check (VSS):**
  - a. Available in-person at the local Police Station or online via [Backcheck](#).
  - b. Must include the **Vulnerable Sectors Check** to be valid.
  - c. The school **can reimburse costs**—contact us for details.
- 2. Child Abuse Register Check:**
  - a. Can be completed online [here](#)

## Tattletales Coins for Books Campaign

We're excited to participate again in the **Tattletales Coins for Books Campaign** this February! This initiative, started 18 years ago by a local bookstore, raises funds for new books in schools. For every dollar collected, our school receives approximately 1.3 times its value in books—supporting both local business and student literacy.

 Campaign Dates: February 17-28

 Class with the highest contribution wins a special reward!

Bring your nickels, dimes, quarters, loonies, and toonies and help your class win!

## SMES Updates

- Students are enjoying the new outdoor equipment, and we are seeing increased physical activity and engagement during recess and lunch time!
- Volleyball Intramurals for Grade 6 are underway and will conclude with a staff vs. students match in February.
- Exciting upcoming guest presentations, including:
  - Parks Canada on Sable Island
  - Halifax Wanderers visit
  - Unity Through Drumming Workshops by Goatworks

## February is Registration Month

Do you have a child who will be starting pre-primary or primary this fall? It's time to register!

**Registration for the 2025-26 school year begins on February 3.** To ensure we have the right staff and supports in place for September, it's important that we gather enrolment numbers now.

**Tip:** Before you begin, make sure you have the following documents in electronic form (image, PDF or Word document):

- Proof of identity/age with one of the following: birth certificate, passport, immigration papers, or legal adoption papers) if you are new to the HRCE;
- Proof of home address (a recently dated official government or utility document with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment or a mortgage contract); and

Visit the [HRCE website](#) for more information and to enrol your child today through PowerSchool Enrollment!

Don't have a child to register? Maybe you know someone who does! Please help us spread the word and pass this information on to friends, neighbours or relatives who will be looking to register for the fall.

## Celebrate African Heritage Month 2025

African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia, celebrated each February, honours the contributions of African Nova Scotians. This year's theme, Legacy in Action: Celebrating Black Brilliance, highlights the achievements and resilience of African Nova Scotians, who have shaped the province's history for more than 400 years.



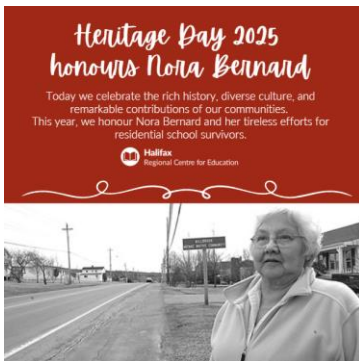


In schools, recognizing African Heritage Month is crucial for promoting cultural awareness and inclusion. It fosters understanding of the diverse cultural landscape of Nova Scotia, empowering African Nova Scotian students by reflecting their history and heritage in their classrooms. Highlighting their achievements serves as a source of inspiration.

African Heritage Month 2025 is an opportunity to educate, inspire, and celebrate the richness of African heritage in Nova Scotia every day.

## Reminder: February 17 is Heritage Day

Heritage Day 2025 honours the late Nora Madeline Bernard. From Millbrook First Nation, she was a Mi'kmaq activist who fought for her community and First Nations people across Canada.



Ms. Bernard played a key role in getting justice, recognition, and compensation for survivors of the Canadian Indian Residential School system. As a survivor of the system herself, she founded and became president of the Shubenacadie Indian Residential School Association in 1987. She then started a class-action lawsuit for the survivors, which inspired others across the country to do the same, leading to the largest class-action lawsuit in Canadian history.

## Supporting Literacy Development (Primary to Grade 6)

Curious about your child's literacy development? HRCE now offers a new online resource that breaks down literacy milestones for children from Primary to Grade 6 as they learn to read and write. [Learn more here.](#)

