

October is Mi'kmaq
Heritage Month



October Newsletter

Saint Mary's Elementary School

Phone: 902-421-6749
Website: <https://smr.hrce.ca>

Safe Arrival: 1-800-582-6940

Principal: K. Longard
Admin Assistant: W. Carter

Principal's Message

We had a very successful start to our school year. Students and staff are both excited to be back learning together. We had a busy month of September, including three safety drills (fire, lockdown and hold and secure), Stand Up Against Bullying Day, school photos and our second National Day for Truth and Reconciliation. October, being Mi'kmaq Heritage Month, promises to be another month of important and exciting learning for all.

Safe, Healthy Community

We continue to face a number of different health concerns in our community and appreciate that our families, staff and students are committed to helping keep our community safe. We sanitize and wash our hands as frequently as possible and are working to respect each other's personal space. In order to keep each other safe, students, staff and visitors should stay home when they are ill. They can return to school when they are feeling better, and have not had fever-reducing medication for 24 hours. Please remember to call our Safe Arrival number (1-800-582-6940) to report any absence.

Halloween

This year, Halloween falls on Tuesday, October 31st. Students who wish to, may come to school dressed in a costume. Please do not send costumes that cover students' faces (i.e. masks) or that have weapons. If your child does not wish to wear a costume, they are invited to wear orange and black clothing. The school will be providing some special treats that day so nothing other than your child's usual lunch/snack items needs to be sent in with them.

Outdoor Play

Playing and physical activity is an important part of education. At Saint Mary's, we encourage students to get outside, and play with their peers at multiple times during the day, including recesses, lunch and outdoor learning opportunities. Please ensure that students are dressed appropriately for the weather each day. We go outside unless it is raining very hard or extremely cold. Students cannot stay inside when their class goes out as we do not have supervision for them. You may also wish to tuck a change of clothes in your child's backpack in case they get wet or muddy while playing outside.

School Advisory Council (SAC)

The SAC is a group of parents, staff and community members who act in an advisory capacity to the school principal and Regional Centre of Education on a range of issues related to the school and school system. SACs play an important role in supporting student success at the school community level. We are seeking additional parent/guardian and community members so if you are interested, please contact Mrs. Longard at KLongard@hrce.ca

Our next SAC meeting will be October 18th at 6:30 pm via Zoom. All parents/guardians are welcome to attend. Please email Mrs. Longard and she will send you the meeting link prior to.

Mi'kmaq Heritage Month

The focus of Mi'kmaq Heritage Month this year is sports, traditional games and pastimes. The team at Mi'kmawey Debert, including renowned Mi'kmaw artist Gerald Gloade and their content developers carefully crafted the message of this year's poster that sports, games and pastimes have been a tool to develop young minds. These teachings carry us into ways of thinking, moving and being as adults. If you are interested in more information, please click on the following link..

<https://mikmaqhistorymonth.ca/>

Up-Coming Dates

- Oct. 9 - Thanksgiving - No school for students
- Oct. 4, 5, 11, 13 - Gr 6 Assessment
- Oct. 19 - Picture Retake Day
- Oct. 20 - Bus Evacuation Drill
- Oct. 27 - Conference Day - No school for students
- Oct. 31 - Halloween



Important Reminder

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school. This includes items that contain peanut butter (i.e. Reese's Pieces) as well as Nutella (i.e. sandwiches or baked goods). We have several allergies at our school and we want to do all we can to keep them safe.

Water Bottles

Please ensure that your child comes to school with a water bottle each day. Having access to one that they can refill as needed will help them to stay hydrated throughout the day.

Late Arrival

The outside doors to the school close at 8:55 am each morning. If your child arrives after that time, please bring them to the front entrance and ring the bell for entry.

Safe Dismissal

Please send teachers a note if there is a change to your child's dismissal procedure (ie, someone different is picking your child up, they are going home with a friend, etc.). This allows us to ensure that children are getting safely to their after school place. Also, students are not allowed to be on school grounds before or after school without parent/guardian supervision.

Picture Retakes

Picture retake day is Thursday, October 19th. If you are requesting a retake or your child was absent on Picture Day, please let your child's teacher know.

Remembrance Day

In honour of this solemn day, we will be having a Remembrance Day ceremony for students and staff at school the morning of Wednesday, November 8th. If your child participates in Beavers, Girl Guides or any other organization in which they wear a uniform, they are invited to wear that uniform to school on November 9th.

If you or any other family members have served or are currently serving in any branch of the armed forces, we would like to invite you to our ceremony. If you would like to come, please let Mrs. Longard know via email (KLongard@hrce.ca) by November 1st so that we can make the proper arrangements.



Parent/Guardian Volunteers

HRCE values the many roles that volunteers play in our schools. We are in need of volunteers for a variety of different events throughout the school year.

In order to be able to volunteer, you must have a current Child Abuse Registry and Criminal Records Checks (with a Vulnerable Sector Check) completed within the last 6 months. We will gladly provide you with a letter to the Halifax Regional Police for a reduced cost for the CRC with VS.

Please click on the following link for more information or contact Mrs. Carter at the school office.

<https://www.hrce.ca/volunteer>

Emergency Planning

All HRCE schools have Emergency Management Plans, which are reviewed, updated and practiced every year. These plans have three responses to an emergency situation: *Shelter in Place*, *Evacuation*, and *Relocation*.

- *Shelter in Place* involves either a *Hold and Secure* (where no one enters or exits the building, but those inside may be able to move around) or a *Lockdown* (where no one enters or exits the building and all students and staff are concealed in a secure location, away from doors and windows).
- *Evacuation* involves all students and staff exiting the building but remaining on the property.
- *Relocation* involves all students and staff moving from the school property to another nearby site.
- It is also important to note that HRCE can respond to an emergency evacuation using our large network of school buses. There are more than 400 school buses on the road every day.

IN CASE OF EMERGENCY, WE'RE READY!

All HRCE schools have Emergency Management Plans, which are reviewed, updated and practiced every year. These plans have three responses to an emergency situation: Shelter in Place, Evacuation, and Relocation.



Bus Evacuation

Even though Saint Mary's is not a bussed school, we still practice bus safety to prepare students for any potential school trips involving travel by bus. This year's bus evacuation still will be taking place on Friday, October 20th from 9:30-11:30 (rain date of October 23rd). HRCE bus drivers will review bus safety procedures with staff and students and will practice what to do in the event of an emergency. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this, please contact Mrs. Longard at the school.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS FOR SCHOOL BUS SAFETY WEEK!

- Respect and listen to the driver.
- Keep noise levels to a minimum.
- Do not stand or move seats 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.



Our Joint Accessibility Plan has been finalized

Thank you for sharing your voice,
thoughts, ideas and feedback
during our consultation.

Please take a look and consider how you
can be a part of this important change!

