



January 2024 Newsletter Saint Mary's Elementary School

Phone: 902-421-6749

Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

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

Principal: K. Longard

Admin Assistant: S. Gurram

Principal's Message

Welcome to January! We have had a great start to 2024 here at school. Students and staff were excited to see each other after the break. We quickly got back into the swing of things and are looking forward to what the rest of the school year has to bring.

Mrs. Longard

Communication between Home and School

Report cards and Parent-Teacher conferences are not the only way that we communicate student learning and progress through the year, and they are not the only times you can speak with your child's teacher. If you have any questions or concerns about how your child is doing at school, please reach out to their classroom teacher(s). Communication and collaboration between school and home are essential to student success and are very important to the team here at Saint Mary's.

Upcoming Drills

We will be having our next Lockdown Drill during the week of February 12-16. More information will be sent home just prior to. Our monthly Fire Drill practices will resume in April.

Staffing Update

As you already know, Mrs. Carter recently left Saint Mary's in December to pursue an opportunity at another school. Our new administrative assistant, Ms. Sushmita Gurram, will be starting with us on January 15th. Welcome to Saint Mary's Ms. Gurram!

Chaperones Needed

A number of our classes are considering possible field trips over the remainder of the school year. To make these trips happen, we need chaperones to accompany us. If you have flexibility in your schedule and would be interested in helping us out in this way, please contact the office to obtain the Child Abuse Register Form and Criminal Records Check with Vulnerable Sector letter.

There is a cost to this but don't let that hold you back. Just let us know if this is a concern and we can help with that, courtesy of our SAC. Thank you in advance for your help with this!

SAC (School Advisory Council)

Our SAC meets most months, and all school community members are welcome to attend those meetings.

At this time, meetings are held via Zoom.

We are currently seeking additional parent/guardian and community members to broaden the voice and perspectives of our school community.

Our next SAC meeting will be held on January 24th, 2024 at 6:30 pm. You can let Mrs. Longard know that you would like to attend, and she will send you the meeting link.

December Concert

It was wonderful to see so many of you here at school last month for our December concert. The students did such an amazing job. A big thank you to Ms. Wilson for sharing her love of music with all of us here at Saint Mary's!



New Year - New Website

Check out the new HRCE.ca!

Last winter, we asked staff, families, and SACs for feedback on our website. We used that input to build a new family-focused site that prominently features the information our communities need most.

You'll notice:

- Fewer pages – we deleted outdated information.
- A clean, modern look and feel – it's an easy-to-navigate, user-friendly experience.
- Significantly improved accessibility – this is better for our community members who use screen readers and translation services.

[Halifax Regional Centre for Education \(hrce.ca\)](https://hrce.ca)

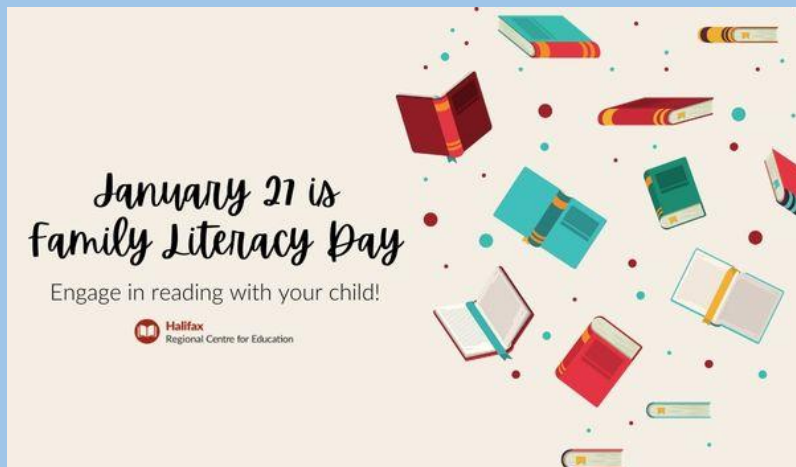


January 27 is Family Literacy Day

Family Literacy Day takes place each year on January 27 to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family.

This year's theme, in honour of Family Literacy Day's 25th anniversary, is let's have a party! Make food, sing songs, and play games. The possibilities for learning are endless.

<https://www.hrce.ca/learning/elementary/reading-your-child>





Weather Appropriate Clothing

Students should come to school each day dressed for the weather conditions. Students go outside multiple times each day and it is important for them to be dressed warmly as the weather gets colder. We will go out in all but extreme conditions. It's also a great idea to keep a change of clothes in your child's backpack in case they need them.

Lice

Please remember to check your student's head periodically for lice. Students who have lice may return to school after they have been treated and there are no live lice on their heads. If you need support through this process, let us know and we can send home information.

Water Bottles and Snacks

It is very important that students bring a water bottle with them each day to school. Please remember to pack one in their bags. Also, please ensure that your child comes to school each day with their lunch and enough snacks for the day.

Upcoming Dates

- Feb 19th - Heritage Day - No Classes
- Mar 11-15th - March Break
- Mar 18th - Assessment & Evaluation Day - No Classes
- Mar 27th - Report Cards sent home
- Mar 29th & Apr 1 - No School due to the Easter Holiday
- April 4th - AM Professional Development and PM Parent/Guardian Conferences - No Classes

Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent, please remember to call our Safe Arrival program.

1-833-582-6940 (Toll Free)



Reminders

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school
- No pets on school property between 8:45 am-3 pm.
- Respect “No Parking” and “No Stopping” signs when dropping off and picking up your students.

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 that is not on your contact list, they are going home with a friend, etc.) This allows us to ensure that children are getting safely to their after school place.

Playground Safety and Supervision

Students are not to be arriving at school before 8:45 am and must come directly into the school upon arrival. There is no supervision for students arriving early to play before school. Any students staying after school to play must be with an adult.

February Is Registration Month

In the HRCE, February is traditionally registration month. Registering new students in February allows the system to ensure that staffing, done in the spring for the next school year, is accurate at each school. Families are required to register online.

All students who are currently attending Saint Mary's Elementary, including those in pre-primary at Inglis Street Elementary, do not need to re-register. If you know anyone with a child who will be 4 or 5 by Dec. 31, 2024, please let them know that we are accepting registrations for pre-primary and primary. They can follow the Student Registration Process link on our school website (smr.hrce.ca).

What's Pre-Primary all about?

Check out our [Welcome to Pre-Primary](#) site.

What does Grade Primary look like?

Visit our [Welcome to Primary](#) site.



Primary French Immersion Registration

For those families who are interested in their child attending the French Immersion program at LeMarchant-St Thomas Elementary, please contact that school at 902-421-6769 for more information.

Inclement Weather and School Cancellations

In the event of school cancellation due to inclement weather and other exceptional circumstances, the decision to cancel school is made as close to 6:00 am as possible. Here are some ways you can find out:

- HRCE Website at www.hrce.ca
- Follow HRCE on Twitter at [Twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS)
- Call the information line at 902-464-4636
- Listen to the radio (all local radio stations)
- Sign up to receive text messages from the HRCE

At times, schools may be cancelled by “Family of Schools”. **We are in the Citadel High family of schools.** In the event school is cancelled during the school day, the decision is usually made by 11 am. The school will contact all families to confirm procedures to release your children. Please ensure your child knows what to do in case of early closure and ensure that your phone numbers and email addresses are up-to-date so we can contact you. Students are not released until we have made contact with a parent/guardian or designate as you identified on the registration forms sent home in September.

If school is cancelled during the day, we will dismiss students as per their parent/guardian instruction at 11:30. If you can avoid it, do not come to pick your child up early as this will result in a number of parents/guardians in close contact. Parents, guardians and caregivers are requested to wait outside their regular dismissal door at 11:30 for their children. All students who need to wait for a later pick-up will be supervised until they are picked up.

On days when conditions exist that it is not safe to open schools at the regularly scheduled time but it is predicted that conditions will improve, a 2-hour delayed opening may be considered. In this situation, students cannot arrive before 10:45 and classes will begin at 10:55. Lunch and dismissal times will not be affected.