



February 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

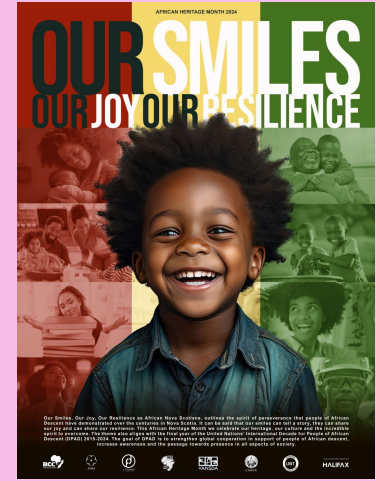
Principal's Message

February is here , which means we are already half way through this school year! So many great things have been happening here at Saint Mary's. Students are engaged in their learning and it's wonderful to see and celebrate all of their accomplishments. This month, we will be recognizing African Heritage Month as well as preparing for September by ensuring that new Pre Primary and Primary students are properly registered to attend school in the fall. Thank you for your continued support!

Mrs. Longard

African Heritage Month

We continue to appreciate February as an opportunity to celebrate African Heritage in Nova Scotia. Saint Mary's Elementary is committed to ensuring that all students are reflected in our building, classrooms and resources. This year's theme is, **Our Smiles, Our Joy, Our Resilience as African Nova Scotians**. This is a time to celebrate and recognize the history and culture of people of African descent. The theme aligns with the final year of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD) 2015-2024. The goal is to strengthen global cooperation in support of people of African descent, increase awareness and recognize their full and equal participation in all aspects of society.



Upcoming Dates

- Feb 12-16th: Lockdown Drill
- Feb 19th - Heritage Day - No Classes for Students
- Mar 11-15th - March Break - No Classes for Students
- Mar 18th - Assessment & Evaluation Day - No Classes for Students
- Mar 27th - Report Cards sent home

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.

Safe Arrival

If your child is going to be late or absent, please remember to call our Safe Arrival program, instead of calling the main office. Excuse them for the day and if they arrive during the day, the system will be updated upon their arrival.

1-833-582-6940 (Toll Free)

Reminders

- Do not send nut or peanut products to school
- Please do not send food to share, due to allergies
- No pets on school property between 8:45 am-3:15 pm.
- Respect "No Parking" and "No Stopping" signs when dropping off and picking up your students.

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 coming early or 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 now accepting registrations for pre-primary and primary. They can follow the Student Registration Process link on our school website <https://smr.hrce.ca/>.

Out-of-area requests for the 2024-25 school year will open on April 2, 2024 at 8 a.m. Parents/guardians may seek placement for their child in a school outside of the neighbourhood in which they reside. Out-of-area requests can be made for students in Grades Pre-Primary to 12, **however there is no guarantee that they will be accepted. The out-of-area transfer is permanent.** By accepting an out-of-area transfer, families are responsible for transporting their child to and from school. Please contact the [Student Transportation Team](#) if you have questions about bus eligibility. **To make an Out-of-Area request, [click here](#).** If you have any questions about the registration process, please contact the school office at 902-421-6749.

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.



February is Registration Month!

If your child was born between January 1 and December 31, 2020, they are eligible to begin school in September 2024!

Visit [HRCE.ca](https://hrce.ca) to register!

 Halifax Regional Centre for Education

The poster features a circular inset image showing a classroom scene with children raising their hands. The background is white with red concentric circles in the corners.

Heritage Day 2024

Observing Nova Scotia Heritage Day on the third Monday of February is an annual occasion to reflect on our province's rich history. It's a chance to recognize the remarkable people, places, and events that have shaped our unique heritage.

This year, Heritage Day is on Monday, February 19th and there will be no school for staff and students.

Please take time to learn about **William Hall**, the 2024 honoree, [here](#).



Coins for Books

For the month of February, Saint Mary's will be participating in the 17th annual Coins Campaign through Tattletales, a local bookstore.

We are asking that if you are able to donate, please send any loose change that you might have into school. This change (and any other funds you wish to send) will be collected throughout the month and then sent to Tattletales, where it will be combined with contributions from other friends and publishers. This will result in Saint Mary's receiving a credit to be able to purchase new books for our school library.

Thank you in advance for your continued support in providing rich literacy experiences for our students!



Tattletales
Books • Toys • Collectibles

Slow down in school zones

To ensure our students' safety, here are a few reminders for drivers navigating any school zone.

- Follow school zone speed limits
- Be prepared to stop for a school or transit bus at any time
- Remember to stop whenever you approach a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing, regardless of the direction of travel
- Give yourself extra time during your morning and after school commutes
- Always watch for pedestrians
- Always obey crossing guards
- Avoid distractions while driving

Also, please do not remain parked in our shared driveway and parking spots after dismissal as we do have others who need to use the space. We appreciate your continued cooperation in this matter.

Lockdown Drill

In the fall, we practiced what we call a Lockdown Drill. We will be having another one of those drills the week of **Feb 12-16**. During a lockdown drill, classroom doors are secured and the students remain in a safe spot 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.

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.

What's Been Happening at Saint Mary's?

Buddies with P/1 and 6



What's Been Happening at Saint Mary's?

Having fun outside at lunch



What's Been Happening at Saint Mary's?

Music from the Grade 6 Band students



Winter Weather

We love to get outside and plan to spend as many recesses and lunches playing outside as we can throughout the winter. We love the snow! We take the temperature and wind chill into consideration when deciding to send students outside but we are able to get out most days. Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather. When students are sent outside, we do not have supervision for students to stay inside. We require students to wear a jacket, boots and snow pants if they are to play in the snow. This helps avoid students having to sit around in wet clothes after playing outside. Hats and mitts/gloves are important too; we do not have a supply of them here. Students can easily get wet playing in the snow so it's a good idea to tuck a dry set of clothes in the backpack in case your child needs to get changed during the day.



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.