

Upcoming Events: May

May 6- Spring Concert
(Grades 3/4-6, Band, Violin,
and Choir, Spatz Theatre,
5:30-7pm.

May 12/13/20/21: Grade 3
Provincial Assessments (am)

May 13: SAC/HSA

May 12-16: Black Excellence
Week

May 17: International Day
Against Homophobia,
Transphobia, and Biphobia

May 19: Victoria Day (no
school)

May 25-31: Nova Scotia
Access Awareness Week

May 30: DAL/SJAM Day

May 31: SJAM Spring Fair

Other Notable Dates:

May: Asian
Heritage/Canadian Jewish
Heritage/Polish
Heritage/Speech & Hearing
Month

May 1: Public School
Administrators Day

May 5: Red Dress Day

May 5-9: Teacher
Appreciation Week

May 11-17: Education Week

ÉCOLE ST. JOSEPH'S A. MCKAY SCHOOL

Principal: Cheyanne Gorman-Tolliver **Vice Principal:** Katie Mott/
Admin. Assistant: Sandy Harrison

Phone: 902- 493-5180

Website: <https://sje.hrce.ca/> **Email:** sjam@hrce.ca

Safe Arrival: 1-833-582-6940

Follow us on The SJAM Home & School Facebook Page.

Dear SJAM Families:

May has arrived, bringing warmer days and more outdoor fun for our students. Please ensure your child is dressed in appropriate weather clothing and comfortable outdoor sneakers, as they'll be spending more time outside.

At SJAM we need a strong bond between home and school. Your involvement is key to reinforcing the positive behavior messages students receive at school including being safe, using hands for helping, and speaking kind words. We continually ask for your support in teaching these expectations. As we work through the provincial Safe School Strategy which includes the new Provincial Code of Conduct, we look forward to welcoming you to focus groups to get your feedback on a Vision & Values Statement and a School Wide Expectation Matrix to be used at SJAM to address ongoing behaviour challenges. The goal is to have these implemented in September 2025! Our community of learners is enthusiastic and ready to engage daily, but they also need adult guidance to navigate their behavior. Together, we can create a nurturing environment where every child thrives in a safe learning environment.

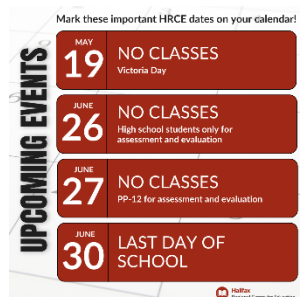
Call to Action: We invite you to join us if you can in upcoming school events and activities. Your participation not only enriches our community but also shows our

students the importance of collaboration and support. Keep an eye on our calendar for exciting opportunities to get involved!

Feel free to share any thoughts or suggestions you have for the newsletter or events and activities you'd like to see happen at SJAM.

On a final note, May is a busy month for recognizing all the different groups of people that make a special community. Please take some time as a family (we will as a school) to recognize: Asian Heritage Month, Canadian Jewish Heritage Month, Polish Heritage Month, Speech & Hearing Month, International Day Against Homophobia, Transphobia & Biphobia, Red Dress Day in recognition of missing and murdered Mi'kmaq & Indigenous Women & Girls, Nova Scotia Access Awareness Week, and finally Teacher Appreciation Week! See our school calendar for dates and remember it takes a village!

Important Dates for May & June:



Here are a few key dates to note in HRCE's calendar for May and June:

- **May 19:** No classes for PP-12 for Victoria Day
- **June 26:** No classes for high school students only for assessment and evaluation
- **June 27:** No classes for PP-12 for assessment and evaluation
- **June 30:** Last day of school

2025-2026 Excel Registration:

The EXCEL Before and After Program is a recreation based, fee-for-service before and after school program run by Halifax Regional Centre for Education. At each school site where EXCEL is offered, the dedicated staffing teams plan games and activities that suit the needs and interests of all registered students. Since EXCEL began more than 25 years ago, staff have continually enhanced the program based on experiences and feedback. Today, with more than 4,000 participating students, EXCEL is one of the largest programs of its kind in the Maritimes, providing inclusive and engaging programming for participants.

For more information about registration, fees and programing, please [click here](#).

If you have additional questions, please contact the EXCEL Before and After Program Registrar's Office: Kimberly Lozon at 902-464-2000 ext. 2787 or excelregistrar@hrce.ca and Gail Hartling at 902-464-2000 ext. 2236 or excel@hrce.ca.

Celebrating Education Week:



Education Week 2025, May 11 to 17, is a special opportunity to acknowledge educators, school support staff and partners for their outstanding work. This year's theme, *Empowering Futures: Innovation in Education*, celebrates educators who have gone above and beyond in their efforts to infuse innovation into their classrooms and schools.


We applaud educators, school staff, and partners who embrace innovation in meeting the evolving needs of students in preparing them for a rapidly changing future.

Congratulations to HRCE's winners:

- **Alicia Hennessey** | Teacher | Lockview High
- **Rhonda McLean** | School Counsellor | St. Agnes Junior High
- **Diana Hatchette** | Teacher | John Martin Junior High
- **Rosaline "Rosie" Bona** | Principal | Rockingham Elementary
- **Peta-Gay Clarke** | Lead Early Childhood Educator | Central Spryfield Elementary
- **Kristin Welbourn** | Library Support Specialist | Bay View High
- **Phillip Jackson** | African Nova Scotian Student Support Worker | Duc d'Anville Elementary & Clayton Park Junior High
- **Matthew Hughson** | Mi'kmaw/Indigenous Student Support Worker | Sackville High & Leslie Thomas Junior High

Please take a moment, if you feel inspired, to send a note of appreciation to an educator in your child's life who is having a positive impact!



Homework Hub: Finish the Year Strong!



Finish the year off strong with Homework Hub!

- **GNSPES Access**
Easy access to online resources and tutoring through your GNSPES account (gnspe.ca) by clicking on the Nova Scotia Homework Hub icon.
- **24/7 Access**
Anytime access to video tutorials, practice questions and vocabulary review.
- **Bilingual Tutors**
Tutors available for students in:
 - Grade 4-6 Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
 - Grade 7-12 on school nights 5:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Find the Homework Hub at
gnspe.ca or call 1-888-444-6607

Did you know your student has access to Homework Hub? Finish the year off strong with the help of experienced tutors!

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[Watch this video](#)

to learn more about Homework Hub!

Access Awareness Week:

Access Awareness Week takes place annually during the last week of May to raise awareness about disability, access and inclusion. This year, Access Awareness Week runs from May 25-31, and the provincial theme is "Our Voices, Our Votes: Disability Rights in Action."

The provincial Accessibility Directorate is providing all HRCE schools with posters to help bring attention to the importance of removing barriers for people with disabilities.

For 38 years, Nova Scotians have organized community events, flag raising, forums, and concerts during Access Awareness Week to bring attention to the importance of removing barriers for people with disabilities. More information can be found [here](#).



Black Excellence Day!

May 15 is Black Excellence Day!

What is Black Excellence Day? In essence Black Excellence Day is about acknowledging, celebrating, and uplifting Black contributions while fostering a more inclusive and equitable environment. The following are ways you celebrate the fourth annual Black Excellence Day:

Celebrating achievements: Black Excellence Day provides an opportunity to celebrate the achievements, contributions, and successes of Black individuals within the community. It highlights the talent and accomplishments within the Black community, ensuring that Black students have an opportunity to highlight all their positive contributions within the education system.

Promoting equity and inclusion: Recognizing Black Excellence fosters a culture of equity and inclusion within schools. It sends a message that all students, regardless of their background, have the potential to excel and make valuable contributions to society. By celebrating diversity and promoting inclusivity, schools create a more welcoming and supportive environment for all students.

Education and awareness: Black Excellence Day serves as an educational opportunity to raise awareness about the rich history, culture, and achievements of Black people. It provides a platform to share stories of resilience, innovation, and leadership, helping to combat stereotypes and promote understanding and appreciation of Black heritage.

Empowerment and inspiration: By celebrating Black Excellence, students are inspired and empowered to pursue their own goals and dreams. Seeing examples of successful Black individuals from various fields, such as science, arts, politics and sports, can motivate students to strive for their own excellence.

Community engagement: Black Excellence Day can serve as a platform for community engagement and collaboration. It provides an opportunity for schools to partner with local organizations, leaders, and activists within the Black community to organize events, workshops, and discussions that promote dialogue and understanding.

Overall, celebrating Black Excellence Day within HRCE schools is important for fostering a culture of inclusivity, empowerment, and appreciation for the diverse talents and contributions of Black individuals.

To show your support, on May 15th, wear your favorite T-shirt in support of Black Culture/History!

And of course, at SJAM, we make things our own and so as in previous years we will be highlighting Black Excellence the week of May 12-16th. Stay tuned for details on our themed days.

Activities:



SJAM 2 Running Club is underway led by Mme. North supported by other teacher volunteers and is for students in grades 3-6. All students are asked to meet in the gym and bring their sneakers and a water bottle. Running Club meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:10-12:40pm.



The **SJAM 2 Track Team** is gearing up for the upcoming 2025 Elementary Provincial Track & Field Meet. Try outs will be on May 7 & 8 (info sheets were sent home), **Practice** will be as follows:

Jumping & Throwing: Tuesdays May 13, 20, 27

Running: Thursdays May 15, 22, 29

Track Meet Days:

Grade 6: June 2

Grade 5: June 3

Grade 4: June 4

SJAM School Advisory Council (SAC)



New year, new opportunity to add your voice! School Advisory Councils (SACs) play an important role in supporting student success at the school community level. An SAC is an advisory body to the school principal and the Regional Centre for Education (HRCE), on a range of issues related to the school and the school system. Membership can vary, but generally consists of the school principal, parents, teachers, and other community

members. This month we are meeting in person at Needham Community Centre.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 13, 2025 at 6:00pm. If you are interested, please reach out to Ben Stone, SAC Chair, at hrce-sac-sjam@gnspecs.ca or Cheyanne Tolliver, Principal cgorman-tolliver@hrce.ca

Home & School Association



Join us! This month we meet in person at Needham Community Centre. We meet to cook up future fundraising and community building activities for SJAM. All parents/guardians of current students are invited to join the team, which also includes SJAM staff.

Not able to come to a meeting but would like to know when we need volunteers? Do you like to create electronic posters? Do you have fundraising ideas? We have many ways in which you can be a part of the school community with us, and you are not required to attend all meetings.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, May 13, 2025, at 7:00pm. Hope to see you then!

SJAM 2 Spring Fling: Join us on Saturday May 31 11am-2pm at SJAM 2 for a few fun filled hours for both students and families with lots of games for all ages! Fishpond, Hockey and Basketball Shoot, Bouncy castles and Pluck a Duck! The grade 6's will also run a cake walk to raise funds for their end of year celebrations! We will also have a canteen with BBQ hamburgers and hotdogs as well as other treats! Pay at the door to get tickets which will be used at the games and canteen (cake walk will be cash only). Stay tuned for more info sent out by classroom teachers, the school email and posts on our Facebook page as we will be looking for volunteers to run games and donations of food items. Cross your fingers for sunshine so we can spread out in the school yard.

Update on the Rebuild of SJAM School



A quarterly update on the rebuild was sent out in April. If you missed it, you can read more here:

<https://www.hrce.ca/about-hrce/operations-services/capital-projects>

Ms. T and Ms. Mott had a first site visit in April and look forward to the next one in May, stay tuned!

Life @ SJAM2

Students continue to be busy with a variety of learning experiences. Many field trips continue to the local museums, art studios, galleries, parks & playgrounds, etc. Staff continue to volunteer their time to organize and supervise DND Club, Chess Club, GSA/Rainbow Club, Running Club, and our upcoming Punch Needle Club and Track & Field. Guest presenters have been invited into our school including; Orchestra, Glee Club, Sports Professionals, Environmental Experts, and many more! Our student-led SJAM Green Team organized a school wide clean up day for Earth Day and beautified our grounds in preparation for more outdoor activities.

Lastly, we want to send a big shout out to our local HRM Domino's, for their generous sponsorship of SJAM's monthly "Golden Awards"! Classes have been working hard to earn our monthly awards for cleanest classroom, tidiest coat hooks, best lineup, and speaking French (for our Core French and French Immersion classes) and having these prizes has been an added motivator for students. We want to send out appreciation for this community partner in helping to celebrate our student achievements.



Remember, reach out any time!
Your SJAM Admin Team