



### Upcoming Dates: December

**2nd:** Report Cards/IPP  
Distributed via Email

**4th-**Teacher Professional  
Practice Day/Progress  
Conference-**NO SCHOOL  
for Students**

**10th-**Picture Retakes

**18th-** Grades P-2/3 Winter  
Concert

**19th-** Last day for students  
before Winter Break

**22nd-**Teacher Professional  
Practice Day-**No Students**

**December 22-January 4th-**  
Winter Break-School Closed

**January 5-**First Day of  
School for 2026

#### Other Notable Dates

December 3-International Day of  
Persons with Disabilities

December 10: International Human  
Rights Day

December 14-22-Hannukkah

December 25: Christmas Day

December 26-January 1: Kwanzaa

## ECOLE 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](mailto:sjam@hrce.ca)

**Safe Arrival:** 1-833-582-6940

[Follow us on The SJAM Home & School Facebook Page.](#)

### Dear SJAM Families:

As we enter the final month of 2025, we want to take a moment to celebrate the incredible achievements of our students and staff so far this school year. December is a season of reflection, gratitude, and joy, and we are excited for all that lies ahead.

Whether it's the warmth of holiday traditions, the spirit of generosity, or the excitement of year-end projects, December reminds us of the strength and unity within our school community. Together, we've accomplished so much, and we look forward to continuing this journey of growth and success.

We are eager to welcome families to **Progress Conferences on Thursday, December 4th**. By now, you should have heard from your child's teacher to schedule an appointment. If you haven't yet, please reach out—strong communication between home and school is key to ensuring every student thrives.

Our last day of school before Winter Break will be **Friday, December 19th**, and we'll welcome students back on **Monday, January 5th, 2026**. As we close out the year, we wish you and your family a joyful, peaceful Winter

Break. Thank you for your continued support and partnership, we can't wait to see what the rest of the year brings!

### **SJAM School Advisory Council (SAC)/Home & School Association**

Both our School Advisory Council and Home & School Association are completely organized by wonderful staff, family, and community volunteers who continually give of their time and expertise each month to improve and maintain a safe, fun, and inclusive learning environment for all SJAM students. This year,



both committees will be taking a break for the month of December. They would like to wish all SJAM families a restful Winter Break and a wonderful welcome to a new year in 2026! Looking forward to reconvening on the evening of January 13<sup>th</sup>.

In the meantime, if you'd like to become a member please reach out to either the Principal, Cheyanne Gorman-Tolliver (Ms. T) at [cgorman-tolliver@hrce.ca](mailto:cgorman-tolliver@hrce.ca) or our council and committee chairs, Jamesie Coolican (SAC) at [hrce-sac-sjam@gnspecs.ca](mailto:hrce-sac-sjam@gnspecs.ca) and Erin Galliot (Home & School Association) at [sjamhomeandschool@hotmail.com](mailto:sjamhomeandschool@hotmail.com)

### **An SJAM Winter Concert!**



On Thursday December 18, 2025, we will be having a Winter Concert featuring students in **Grade P-2/3**. The concert time is from 6:00-7:00pm. In the Spring we will host another concert featuring grades 3/4-6! Stay tuned for those details. Band and Violin will also perform in the Spring.

Once again, we need your support in ensuring the event is a success.

Please note the following:

\*Student arrival time is 5:45pm using the side entrance of Highland Park Jr. High.

\*There is no dress code, any props will be provided by school.

\*No outside food or drink is allowed except for water bottles. We want to be respectful of the generous offer of our host school.

\*We encourage families to stay for the whole show and not leave after their child's performance.

\*Due to capacity of our venue, tickets will be issued, monitored, and collected at the entrance. **Two tickets per family will be issued** as the date gets closer. **We expect and appreciate your support in this as we must be respectful of the fire marshal regulations in a space that is not ours.** Things will change once we are in our new school.

All of the students are working so hard to showcase their talents for you! Can't wait to see you all there!

## Lost & Found

We have a growing collection of items in our Lost & Found and many coats that are needed in this cold weather. We encourage families when they visit on Progress Conference Day that you look over the items and take anything that belongs to your child. What is not claimed by December 19<sup>th</sup> will be gathered up and donated to an outside organization. We'd also recommend that you write your child's name on all their belongings, clothing, shoes, lunch boxes, and water bottles.

## SchoolsPlus



Schools  
Écoles Plus  
NOVA SCOTIA / NOUVELLE-ÉCOSSE

SchoolsPlus is a confidential, free service available in every school in Nova Scotia. Our goal is to build positive relationships between families, schools, and communities. We can help families navigate complicated situations when they are involved with many different services.

Phone: 902-464-2041  
Email: [schoolsplus@hrce.ca](mailto:schoolsplus@hrce.ca)

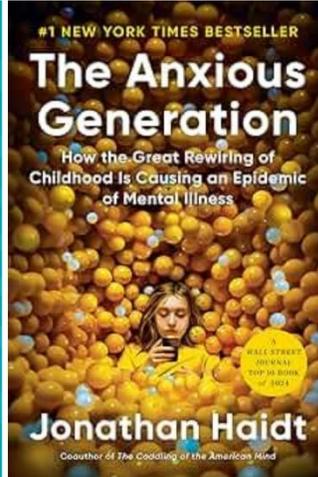
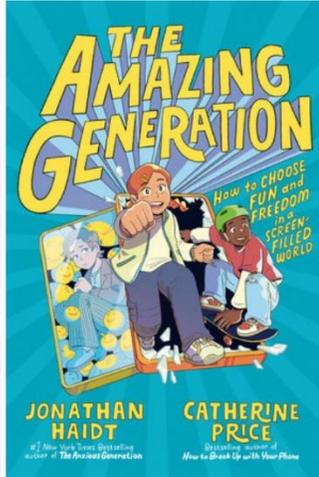
SchoolsPlus is here to support you! It is a confidential, free service available in every school in Nova Scotia. Our goal is to build positive relationships between families, schools, and communities. Parents, guardians and students (12+) can self-refer to SchoolsPlus 12 months a year! Just contact the SchoolsPlus Facilitator at your school. Call 902-464-2000, ext. 2331 or email [schoolsplus@hrce.ca](mailto:schoolsplus@hrce.ca). Learn more about SchoolsPlus [here](#).

**At SJAM our SchoolsPlus Outreach Worker is Brenda McNutt at [bmcnutt@hrce.ca](mailto:bmcnutt@hrce.ca)**

## Resources for Parents from Unplugged Canada

If you're concerned about your kids' screen time, smartphone use, or social media pressure, there are some wonderful resources below to help parents and caregivers navigate the challenges of raising kids in a digital world.

**For parents: *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt** highlights the research and



evidence behind how early smartphone and social media exposure have shaped a generation over the last 10–15 years. **Ten Rules for Raising Kids in a High-Tech World** by Jean Twenge offers

practical, actionable guidance to help parents set healthy boundaries and support their kids' digital wellbeing.

**For kids: *The Amazing Generation*, written for pre-teens and teens and co-authored by Jonathan Haidt**, will be released on December 30. It explains the impact of today's digital environment in an engaging, age-appropriate way.

All of these books are available at your local library or bookstore.

*Unplugged Canada is a parent-led, national movement advocating for healthier childhoods by delaying smartphones and social media until kids are more developmentally ready. Join thousands of Canadian families choosing to delay by taking the Unplugged Canada Pledge at [unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge](https://unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge).*

## New Educational Technologies Resources for Families

We're excited to share a new online resource designed to help families understand how technology supports students' learning in HRCE. This page provides an overview of how tools like Chromebooks and Google for Education are used in classrooms, what provincially approved online platforms students may access, and how student privacy is protected. You'll also find information about Nova Scotia's guidance on the provincial cell phone expectations, tips for supporting online safety and digital citizenship at home, and an introduction to how students are learning about artificial intelligence in a thoughtful and responsible way. It also includes answers to common questions about screen time, passwords, communication during the school day, and more. You can find the webpage [here](#).

## International Day for Persons with Disabilities



The International Day of Persons with Disabilities (IDPD) is observed annually on December 3rd. The theme for this year is “**Fostering Disability Inclusive Societies for Advancing Social Progress.**”

It means creating a world where people with disabilities are fully and equally integrated into all aspects of society, not as a separate consideration, but as a fundamental driver of development for everyone. It emphasizes that progress in areas like the economy, social development, and culture is hindered without the full participation of people with disabilities and that their inclusion is a necessary pre-requisite for achieving goals

like poverty reduction and sustainable development. At SJAM we pride ourselves on ensuring that we provide an inclusive school community where all can thrive!

## International Human Rights Day



Today is

*International Human Rights Day*

Halifax  
Regional Centre for Education

Did you know that [Canada played a central role in drafting the Universal Declaration of Human Rights?](#)

Human Rights Day is celebrated every year on December 10 — the day on which the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) in 1948.

The Declaration states that each person is entitled to fundamental rights, including the right to equality, and the right to life, liberty and security of the person. It also recognizes the right to freedom of religion and speech and the right to participate in the cultural life of the community.

## Life @ SJAM2:

- ❖ We held our SJAM Remembers ceremony in honor of Remembrance Day
- ❖ Classes visited the Museum of Natural History, the Canadian National Curling Trials at the Scotiabank Centre, Hiking Adventures, and twenty students participated in Santa Flight through WestJet and were able to take a flight around Halifax and then have lunch with Santa.
- ❖ Intramurals, GSA/Rainbow Club, Social Clubs and programs with our ANSSSW continue to be well attended.

- ❖ Members of the DAL Tigers Sports Teams have also been visiting regularly to support reading activities in classrooms and be extra support during outdoor lunch play.
- ❖ The Tim Horton's Leadership Program have been invited into a few grade 5/6 classrooms to support students in developing leadership characteristics. These sessions are taking place over a 5-6 week period ending just before school ends for Winter Break.
- ❖ Roots of Empathy Program has also been invited to a classroom at SJAM; supporting students through discovering empathy by interaction with a guest baby teacher and their family.

### Happy Holidays!

To all who celebrate, we wish you a joyful holiday season! Happy Hanukkah, Merry Christmas and Blessed Kwanzaa, and a wonderful New Year!



See you in 2026!

Your SJAM Admin Team