Our School, Our Community

Safe • Just Think • Act Kindly • Mind Ready

OCTOBER 2026 ISSUE 2



Message from SJAM Admin Team

Welcome to October!

Thank you for your continued support and understanding throughout our school reconfigurations in both our English and French Immersion Programs. Our staff dedicated significant time and thoughtful consideration to creating learning environments that support student success, and we are pleased with how smoothly students are adapting to the changes. Their flexibility and positive attitudes have been wonderful to see.

As we move further into the school year, students are settling into routines and engaging deeply in their learning. We encourage families to continue having conversations about what it means to be successful at school: listening, learning, being kind, and having fun each day.

With the arrival of cooler fall weather, please ensure your child comes to school dressed in layers and prepared for outdoor activities. Fresh air and active play are important parts of student well-being and help students stay focused and ready to learn. We also ask that students take responsibility for their belongings. Our Lost and Found is already growing quickly. Labelling jackets, coats, water bottles, and other personal items helps us return them to their owners more easily.

As we enter cold and flu season, we appreciate your partnership in keeping our school community healthy. If your child is feeling unwell, please keep them home to rest and recover. If a student becomes ill during the school day, families may be contacted to arrange for them to go home. By working together and encouraging healthy habits, we can help minimize the spread of illness and support a successful fall season for all.

Thank you for your ongoing support of our school community. We look forward to another wonderful month of learning and growth together.

Warm regards,
Cheyanne Gorman-Tolliver (Ms. T), Principal
Katie Mott (Ms. Mott), Vice Principal

THIS MONTH

October is Mi'kmaw History Month & Canadian Library Month

1st: Treaty Day

12th: Thanksgiving Holiday-**NO SCHOOL**

13th: SAC 6-7pm/HSA 7-8pm *(in person)*

21st: Picture Day

22nd: Family Bingo Night

23rd: NSTU Conference Day-**NO SCHOOL**

31st: Halloween Parade *(pm)*

Other Important Dates:

5th: World Teachers Day

AT SJAM

Program Reconfigurations: 2-French Immersion & English

English Classes: 8 (up from 7)

French Immersion Classes: 11

Past Events:

- 2 whole school assemblies
- Terry Fox Run/Walk
- Curriculum Night
- Running Club Start

REMEMBER

Bell Schedule

8:30-8:50am: Arrive @ school, enter for soft start.
8:50am: Instruction Day Begins
2:50pm: Dismissal

Mark Your Calendar

Picture Day

Picture Day will be on Wednesday October 21st. We will begin promptly at 8:50am and going until 2:30pm so please make sure your child is on time that day. Class Pictures and Retakes will be Monday November 23rd, 2026.

October 1 is Treaty Day

Treaty Day is an opportunity to learn, reflect and deepen our understanding of the historic and ongoing relationships between Mi'kmaq and non-Mi'kmaq people in Nova Scotia.

Treaties are not simply part of our past. They are living agreements that continue to shape our shared responsibilities today. In schools, Treaty Day provides an important opportunity to help students understand Mi'kmaq history, culture, rights and perspectives, while exploring what it means to live together in a spirit of respect, partnership and reciprocity.

By continuing to learn about the Treaties and our responsibilities within them, we help build stronger relationships and contribute to the ongoing work of reconciliation.

Mi'kmaq History Month

Each October, Mi'kmaq History Month provides an opportunity to deepen our understanding of Mi'kmaq culture, history, language and traditions, while recognizing the important contributions of Mi'kmaq people past and present.

Across our schools, students and staff may mark the month through learning, storytelling, art, community connections and cultural experiences that bring Mi'kmaq perspectives into the classroom and school community.

As we learn together, Mi'kmaq History Month reminds us of the importance of listening, building relationships and continuing our shared commitment to truth and reconciliation.
Learn more about Mi'kmaq History Month **here**.

Fire Prevention Week

Halifax Regional Fire & Emergency is inviting families to take part in Fire Prevention Week, October 4–10. Visit halifax.ca/fpw to complete an online fire safety quiz. Want to win a Nintendo Switch, Apple products or LEGO sets? Participants who score 100% will be entered into a draw for a prize in their age category.

This year's theme, "Safe Charging is a Superpower," focuses on the safe use and charging of rechargeable devices powered by lithium-ion batteries. These batteries power many everyday devices, including phones, tablets, laptops, e-bikes and power tools. If damaged or charged improperly, they can overheat and cause fires.

Visit halifax.ca/fpw for contest details, videos and fire safety resources, and take a few minutes to test your smoke alarms and review your home fire escape plan.

School Bus Safety Week: October 19-23

Every school day, thousands of HRCE students rely on the bus to get to and from school safely. School Bus Safety Week is a chance to highlight the simple habits that help keep everyone safe — from waiting well back from the road, to following the driver's instructions, to staying alert around stopped school buses.

With more than 33,000 HRCE students travelling on more than 400 buses each day, safety depends on all of us: students, families, drivers, schools and motorists.

This week is a good opportunity to review a few everyday reminders and help reinforce safe routines on the bus, at the stop and on the road.

Bus Stop Safety

- Be on time for the bus and please don't run to/from the bus.
- Stand back off the road and don't push or shove when waiting at a stop.
- Always cross in front of the bus. Walk three metres (10 feet) in front of the bus to a point where you can see the driver and wait for the driver's signal to cross. Proceed to the centre of the road, STOP, LOOK & LISTEN and cross the road when it is safe.
- Never crawl under a school bus or cross the road behind the bus.
- Know the danger zones around the bus.

School Bus Safety

- Please respect and listen to the driver and avoid distracting them.
- Please 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.

Remember: In Nova Scotia, it's illegal to pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing and the stop arm is extended.
You can find out more information about riding the school bus in HRCE **here**.

Canadian Library Month

October is a chance to celebrate the important role libraries play in our schools — and the Library Support Specialists who bring those spaces to life.

Every day, our school libraries help students discover new interests, build literacy skills, find reliable information and, sometimes, simply find a welcoming place to spend some time. Our Library Support Specialists are an important part of making that happen.

Canadian Library Workers Day is recognized on the third Friday of October, followed by Canadian School Library Day on the fourth Monday. These are great opportunities to recognize the people who help make our libraries engaging, inclusive and supportive spaces for students.

Please join us in thanking our SJAM Library Support Specialist, Mr. Andrew, for all he does to support students, staff and school communities.

World Teachers Day

Each year on October 5, countries around the world celebrate World Teachers' Day, a day established by UNESCO in 1994 to recognize the important role teachers play in shaping the lives of children and the future of our communities.

This year's theme, *"Standing with Teachers: 60 Years of Protecting the Profession, Advancing Its Status and Shaping Our Futures,"* highlights the ongoing importance of supporting educators and the teaching profession. The day also raises awareness of global educational challenges, including teacher shortages, evolving classroom needs, and ensuring that all students have access to quality learning opportunities.

At SJAM, we are grateful for our dedicated teachers and staff who inspire, support, and encourage our students each and every day.

Safety Spotlight

PARKING	Cafeteria & Outdoor Play
At no time is parking permitted in the school parking lot. We have limited parking spaces, and they are for **STAFF ONLY.**	Please continue to talk with your child about our school expectations, particularly in the cafeteria

The parking lot is routinely monitored for HRCE Parking Passes and those who don't have one will be ticketed and/or towed.

DROP OFF/PICK UP

When dropping off and/or picking up your child(s) school **DO NOT** park:

- in the bus lane on Russell St.,
- in Halifax Academy's Staff Parking lot
- in neighboring driveways.
- on Kaye St and allow children to walk through the parking lot (even if escorted by an adult)

and during outdoor play at recess and lunch. Recently, we have seen an increase in incidents involving students not following adult directions and engaging in hands-on behaviour with peers.

Even if you feel this may not apply to your child, these conversations and reminders at home help reinforce the importance of making safe and respectful choices at school.

As a reminder, an updated **SJAM School Matrix** is attached to this email. By working together, we can help maintain a positive, respectful, and safe learning environment for all students. Thank you for your support and partnership.

Other News

Power Outage Information

As we move into the winter months, we want to share how decisions are made when a school experiences a power outage.
Our priority is always to keep schools open safely when possible. A power outage does not automatically mean classes are cancelled – even if it happens during the school day. The decision depends on when power is expected to be restored.

Here's what happens

When a school loses power, HRCE's Operations Team contacts Nova Scotia Power to gather available details on the cause and an estimated restoration time.

Once we have this information, we consider:

- **Before school starts:** Have buses begun their routes? If so, we wait until students arrive before making a decision. If classes are cancelled, elementary families will be contacted before dismissal.
- **During the school day:** How close is dismissal? What is the temperature in the building? Does the school rely on power for water or septic systems? These factors, among others, help us decide whether to stay open or close. Often, power returns faster than we could safely send students home.

If classes are cancelled:

- HRCE will notify families by email and text.
- Families of elementary students will also receive a phone call before dismissal.
- Deciding to close schools during a power outage is never simple, but safety is always our top priority. We understand that cancellations can be inconvenient, and our goal is to keep students learning in class whenever possible.

More information about school cancellations for any reason can be found here.

Raising A Concern

Did you know that there's a protocol in place to help families contact schools or the HRCE office when you have concerns about your student's education or well-being?

- All concerns should first be shared with your child's teacher.
- If your concern is not resolved, you should then contact the principal.
- If your concern remains unresolved, you can reach out to HRCE's Family Navigators who can provide information about a wide range of supports and resources.
- If your matter continues to be unresolved, you can then initiate a formal review process in which the matter will be investigated by the appropriate HRCE Directors.
- The final step is for your concern to be passed on to the Regional Executive Director.
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Click here to learn more.

Unplugged Canada

Growing independence doesn't have to start with a smartphone

As children get older, parents naturally want to give them more independence, such as walking to the park, playing at a friend's house, staying home for a short time, or getting to activities on their own. A smartphone can seem like the obvious way to make this possible, but it isn't the only option.
There are lots of ways families can give children more freedom while keeping communication simple and age-appropriate:

- **Long-range walkie-talkies:** A simple way for kids to check in while playing in the neighbourhood or exploring outdoors, without access to the internet or social media.
- **A home phone:** Allows children to call friends, make plans or contact a parent when they're home alone.
- **A kids' smartwatch:** Some watches offer limited calling or messaging, without the apps, social media and internet access of a smartphone.
- **A basic talk-and-text phone:** When children eventually need a way to coordinate rides or activities, a simple phone can provide communication without introducing the distractions and social pressures of a smartphone.

The goal is to match the technology to what children actually need. A child who needs to call home doesn't necessarily need a device that also gives them access to social media, games and the internet.

Starting with a more limited device can give children time to develop the responsibility, judgment and independence they'll eventually need to manage a smartphone.

Explore more resources from Unplugged Canada and join thousands of Canadian families taking the Unplugged Canada Pledge to delay smartphones and support connected childhoods.

Family Corner

School Advisory Council (SAC)

Curious about the SJAM School Advisory Council?

The SAC is a group of parents, staff, and community volunteer members who meet once a month to support and advise the school team on the academic achievement and well-being of students who attend SJAM.

• Did you know that anyone can attend an SAC meeting? **Our next meeting is Tuesday October 13, 2026, from 6-7pm. (in person)**

• We are actively searching for new members, especially parents with children in the English Program and Community Members.

If you have any questions reach out to our new chair, Jim Pomeroy at sjam-sac@gnspes.ca.

Home & School Association (HSA)

Join us! We meet in person and online (via TEAMS) 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.

Our next meeting will be Tuesday October 13, 2026, 7-8pm (in person).

If you'd like to become a member or just pop in and see what it's all about before becoming a member, please reach out to either the Principal, Cheyanne Gorman-Tolliver (Ms. T) at cgorman-tolliver@hrce.ca or our committee chair, Erin Galliot, at sjamhomeandschool@hotmail.com

Connect With SJAM

SCHOOL CONTACT INFORMATION

Principal: Cheyanne Gorman-Tolliver (Ms. T) cgorman-tolliver@hrce.ca
Vice Principal: Katie Mott (Ms. Mott) kmott@hrce.ca
Administrative Assistant: Ms. Sandy Harrison sharrison@hrce.ca

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