

ÉCOLE ST. JOSEPH'S A. MCKAY SCHOOL

ACTING PRINCIPAL: AMY HUNT

ACTING VICE PRINCIPAL: KIM CASEY

ADMIN ASSISTANT: SANDY HARRISON



Upcoming Dates:

February: African Heritage Month

February 1: Primary Registration Begins

February 12: SJAM submits Buddy Day Contest Entries for African Heritage Month

February 15th: Heritage day (Edward Francis Arab)

February 17-19: African Drumming Classes

February 22: Virtual Primary FI Info Session (6:00)

February 24: Ecology Action Centre's Winter Walk Day

Contacts:

Phone: 902- 493-5180

Safe Arrival:902-493-6180

Fax: 902- 493-5186

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

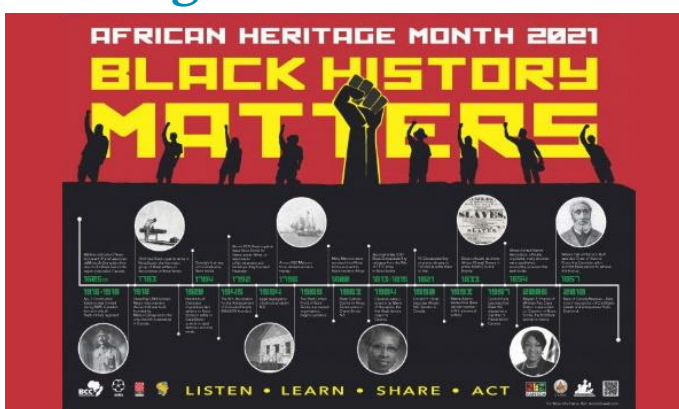
Email: sjam@hrce.ca

Follow us on **Twitter**

@SJAMSchool & the SJAM Home & School Association Facebook Page

Remember to check the school website at <https://sje.hrce.ca/> for updated information.

Message to Families:



Welcome to February! This is an exciting month with a lot happening. At both whole-school and classroom levels, we will be engaged in celebrating African Heritage Month in a variety of ways. Please ask your child what he/she/they are learning!

It is also Primary Registration Month. If you know of any students who will be in grade primary in Sept 2021, now is the time to register! Please call the main office with any questions.

Daily Covid-19 Checklist:

Please continue to use the daily checklist below to check for symptoms of Covid-19 as directed by NS Public Health. Students who are exhibiting symptoms at school will be sent home and families directed to call 811. Students cannot return until 811 has directed that it is safe to do so.



COVID-19 Daily Checklist

It is important to closely monitor your health and the health of those you care for. Please consider these questions each day before leaving home and entering public spaces.

If you are feeling unwell, you should **stay home or go home immediately, and follow the instructions below**. Stay informed. For the most recent information, changes and restrictions visit <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus>.

1

Are you feeling unwell or do you have new or worsening health symptoms?

If yes, stay home and avoid public spaces, including work, school/child care, and shopping.

2

In the past 48 hours have you had, or are you currently experiencing, any of these symptoms?



Fever (i.e. chills/sweats) **OR** Cough (new or worsening)

OR two or more of the following symptoms (new or worsening);



Sore throat



Runny nose/nasal congestion



Headache



Shortness of breath

If yes, stay home and complete the COVID-19 self-assessment online, <https://covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/>. If you are unable to access the online tool, call 811.

3

In the last 14 days, have you or anyone in your household travelled outside Atlantic Canada?

If yes, and the travel is not essential, everyone in your home is required by law to self-isolate for 14 days. For more information on isolation and essential travel, visit <https://novascotia.ca/coronavirus/symptoms-and-testing/#self-isolate>.

4

In the last 14 days, have you had close contact (within 2 metres / 6 feet) with someone confirmed to have COVID-19?

If yes, you must stay home. You are required by law to self-isolate if you have been identified as a close contact of someone with COVID-19. If you haven't spoken with Public Health or been tested, you should complete the online assessment at <https://covid-self-assessment.novascotia.ca/> or contact 811 to be screened for testing for COVID-19.

5

Are you waiting for results from a COVID-19 test or have you tested positive for COVID-19?

If yes, stay home. You are required by law to self-isolate while awaiting COVID-19 test results or if you have tested positive for COVID-19. Please follow instructions given by Public Health.

Revised November 25, 2020

A Note from the SJAM Home and School Association!

Join us! We meet (**Via Zoom**) on the first Tuesday of every month at 6:30pm 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. All you need to do is email us at sjamhomeandschool@hotmail.com and let us know that you would like to receive the invites to our monthly Zoom meetings.



With the pandemic, we are not permitted to fundraise, but would love to hear from you as to how we can continue to connect our community.

Please let us know if you have any ideas. Even if you are not able to attend the meetings, please email your suggestions and interests for virtual connection to sjamhomeandschool@hotmail.com. Can't make the meetings? **Interested in staying informed?** Follow our Facebook Account: "St. Joseph's A. McKay (SJAM) Home and School Association".

Thank you, SJAM HSA

Non-Medical Mask Policy:



Students in Gr 4-6 are required to wear masks (properly fitted covering their nose and mouth).

Please review with your child how to wear a mask properly and remind them that it is mandatory. If your child is in grades 4-6, they must come to school with a personal reusable mask every day. PP-12 students who ride the bus are also required to wear a mask.

Did you know? The Nova Scotia Health Authority, the IWK & Community Health Teams are offering free virtual/online parenting support workshops. The sessions cover many topics including (but not limited to) mental health, wellness, nutrition, anxiety, managing family screen time, behaviour, parenting strategies and self-care. Lots of great info and support available!



Check them out at www.healthyns.ca and by calling 1-844-460-4555.

Update on the Rebuild of SJAM School:



Over the past few years, the Province announced that our school was slated for major renovations. After inspecting the building in early 2020, it was decided that a better plan was a complete rebuild of the building on the same school site. The estimated timeline for this process is as follows:

- demolish the current building in July 2021 after this school year;
- relocate to former **Beaufort** School (1589 Walnut Street; corner of Walnut & Watt streets in the south end) for two school years;
- return to a new school on the existing site in September 2023.

The **School Steering Committee**, comprised of HRCE staff, provincial staff, school staff, architects, SAC members and parents/guardians will focus on the design of the new building and communicate this to the community. Stay tuned for a School Steering Committee website and updates.

The **SJAM Transition Team** will focus on planning and preparing for a positive, safe and effective relocation to the Beaufort site for our students and staff over the next two years. This team is made up of school staff and interested parents and guardians.

The "**Farewell to SJAM 2021**" **Committee** will focus on honouring the history of the current building, and engage the community in a variety of Covid-friendly ways to say goodbye.

If you are interested in joining one of these committees, please email Amy (Acting Principal) at HuntA@hrce.ca or call the main office at 902-493-5180 with any questions or concerns.

This is an exciting process for our school community. We will share any information we receive with you as the process unfolds over the coming months in this newsletter, our school website, through our School Advisory Council (SAC) and Home & School Association (HSA), and on our social media platforms (Twitter & Facebook).

Lunch at SJAM:



Students staying for lunch are expected to come with a lunch that does not require heating, as well as utensils. **Don't forget a reusable water bottle from home!** Please make sure that students bring a packed lunch to school in the morning with them to school. We ask that you do not use outside food delivery services for our shared health & safety. Students are not permitted to leave school grounds during lunch unless accompanied by an adult.

Arrival & Dismissal:

Student Entry (assigned back doors): 8:50-9:00am

Dismissal: 3:00 pm

Late Arrival (front doors) after 9:00am

Please drop your child off at the designated drop-and-go areas on Kaye Street. Students can come onto the school grounds and enter through their designated door at 8:50 am (no earlier). Students cannot be on the school ground before 8:50 am. If your child arrives after 9:00 am they need to come to the front door on Russell Street and check in at the office. At the end of the day at 3:00pm students will be dismissed from their designated door. Please leave the pickup area quickly when you have your child, so we can prevent crowding.

When students arrive at their designated door, school staff greet them and provide hand sanitizer while classroom teachers prepare to receive students in classrooms. Students have adapted well to this arrival routine at school and we are very proud!

Parking/Vehicles:

Please be reminded that there is **no parking** at the private Seton condo building next door to SJAM on Kaye Street, or in the SJAM staff parking lot. Parents who drop off and pick up their child(ren) for school or for Excel using a vehicle are required to use street parking. Thank you.

Safe Arrival:

If your child will not be in school for the regular entry time of 8:50 am, due to illness or appointment, please call the school **Safe Arrival number @ 902-493-6180**. If your child arrives after 9:00 am, they must arrive at the front door (Russell Street main entrance) and check in at the office so we can avoid unnecessary calls. If a child is not in school, and we do not have previous communication as to an absence or appointment, we are required to call.

Communication:

Communication with your child's teacher is important, especially now as parents/guardians are not permitted into the school due to Covid-19. Please reach out and let them know if you have any questions or concerns. It is our priority to work together in partnership. Please allow up to 48 hours for your child's teacher to respond. **The next parent-teacher meetings are scheduled for April 8th, but parents/guardians can reach out at any time.**

Nut Aware/ Scent Aware:

Please be reminded that all schools in the HRCE are nut-aware schools, meaning you are asked not to send any food which contains nuts of any sort. Our schools are also scent-free due to environmental sensitivities.

Outdoor Clothing:



Winter is here! Please send your children to school with weather-appropriate clothing including warm coats, boots, hats, mittens/gloves, and snow pants so that they can play outside safely and comfortably. We have extra hats and mittens in the main office as well!

Guidelines for Closure due to Inclement Weather:

The Halifax Regional Centre for Education takes great care when making the decision to cancel schools and/or buses, or delay the opening of school, in the event of severe or inclement weather. When these situations occur, the information is posted on the HRCE's website at www.hrce.ca , on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS) , recorded at 902-464-INFO (4636) and communicated to local radio stations. Families can also subscribe to receive notice of cancellations and delayed openings by e-mail or text message by following this link: [**https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/subscribe-notifications**](https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/subscribe-notifications)

If weather conditions warrant, the HRCE could implement a delayed opening. Delayed openings would be considered when a weather event has concluded but snow clearing or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the physical plant is experiencing an issue such as a power outage or loss of water and additional time is required to prepare the school to open. If this was to occur, school and Pre-Primary would be delayed by two hours. In our school, this means school would start at 11:00am. If school buses are operating, the expectation will be that students are picked up two hours later than their regularly assigned time pending any weather-related delays. Our lunch and dismissal times will remain at their regularly scheduled times. The EXCEL program will be cancelled for the morning only.

The weather in Nova Scotia is unpredictable so it's always a good idea for families to have a back-up plan for childcare when school is cancelled. To learn more about the process on how decisions regarding closures and cancellations are made, visit: <https://www.hrce.ca/about-our-schools/parents/inclement-weather>

Guidelines for school and/or bus cancellations due to inclement weather

Nova Scotia winter weather can change quickly and can be challenging to predict. This document outlines the steps we take when deciding whether to cancel school and/or bussing.

A 6:00 am announcement could be:

All schools are closed for the day

OR

Some schools (either individually or by family) are closed for the day

OR

All schools are open, but some or all busses are not operating for the day

OR

All schools are delayed in opening by 2 hours

If weather deteriorates, or is forecast to worsen throughout the morning

An 11:00 am announcement could be:

Bussed students will be picked up 2 hours earlier than their regular dismissal time

AND

Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour

Remember:
Parents/guardians always have the right to keep their child home from school if they believe that the travelling conditions are unsuitable.

How does Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) decide on school and/or bus cancellations?

By 4:30 am, HRCE staff begin to gather information from:

- A contracted weather service that provides radar and satellite imagery, real-time road conditions and weather warnings;
- A meteorologist who provides forecast details, level and type of precipitation and impact on road conditions;
- HRCE’s three transportation service providers, who provide updates on road conditions in their area;
- Municipal and provincial transportation staff; and
- Other local weather services, including Environment Canada and the Weather Network.

By 5:30 am, HRCE staff make recommendations to the Regional Executive Director (or designate), who then makes the final decision.

This decision is communicated by 6:00 am.



Halifax
Regional Centre for Education

Where can cancellation information be found?

Website: www.hrce.ca

Twitter: @HRCE_NS

Phone: 902-464-INFO (4636)

Local media outlets

Subscribe to email/text notifications at www.hrce.ca