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# December Newsletter

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## St. Stephen's Elementary School

3669 Highland Ave., Halifax, NS B3K 4J9

**PRINCIPAL:** David Madgett **VICE-PRINCIPAL:** Nicole Gerrard

**ADMIN. ASSISTANT:** Heather Cosgrove-Smith

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## Upcoming Events

### Principal's Message

November has been a busy month with Remembrance Day, Toy Bingo, report cards going home, the end of term 1 coupled with a change in the weather and a growing sense that the holiday season is just around the corner.

On that note, as December unfolds, our school is buzzing with excitement and holiday spirit! This month is filled with opportunities to celebrate, connect, and reflect on the progress we've made together so far this year. From our much-anticipated Christmas concert to Parent-Teacher Conferences, these events remind us of the strong partnership we share with families in supporting student success. To think, this takes place all in the first week. Throughout the next few weeks, there will be spirit days, holiday activities, and who knows, maybe some snow!

December is also a time to pause and appreciate the dedication of our staff, the enthusiasm of our students, and the support of our community. Together, we've built a warm, welcoming environment where learning and growth thrive.

As we head into the holiday season, we encourage everyone to take time to recharge and enjoy moments with loved ones. Thank you for your continued support, and I wish you all a joyful and peaceful holiday season. We will see you all back on Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2025!

Yours in Learning,

Dave Madgett, Principal and Nicole Gerrard, Vice-Principal

## What's New

### December Spirit Days

Through the month of December we are closing out the calendar year with 3 Days of School Spirit. Please see below for the list of tentative events.

### Monday, December 2<sup>nd</sup>

- Concert tickets go home (2 per family)

### Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>

- 1pm Matinee Holiday Concert (no tickets required)
- 6pm Evening Holiday Concert (tickets required)

### Thursday, December 5<sup>th</sup>

- PD Day-AM
- Parent-Teacher Interviews-1-3 & 5-7 PM  
**(no classes all day)**

### Friday, December 6<sup>th</sup>

- **Wear your Holiday Colours**

### Friday, December 13<sup>th</sup>

- **Fun Hair/Fun Hat Day**

### Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>

- **Comfy Cozy, Hot Chocolate (Prepared by our fabulous PTA)**

### Friday, December 20<sup>th</sup>

- Last day before break

### Wednesday, December 25<sup>th</sup>

- Christmas Day
- Hanukkah Begins

### Thursday, December 26<sup>th</sup>

- Kwanzaa Begins
- Boxing Day

### Wednesday, January 1<sup>st</sup>

- New Year's Day (No School)
- Kwanzaa Ends

### Thursday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>

- First Day Back...Happy New Year! (No School for Students)
- Hanukkah Ends

### Friday, January 3<sup>rd</sup>

- First Day for staff and students

Date	Event
Fri. December 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Wear your Holiday Colours</b>
Fri. December 13 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Fun Hair/Fun Hat Day</b>
Thurs. December 19 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Comfy Cozy, Hot Chocolate Day</b>

## Holiday Concert

Our Holiday Concert is just a couple days away. We will have a matinee performance at 1pm (doors open at 12:30pm) and an evening performance at 6pm (doors open at 5:30pm) on Tuesday, December 3rd. For the evening performance, each family will be permitted two guests (tickets will be sent home on Monday, December 2nd), as Fire Regulations only allow 585 persons in the gym. We encourage grandparents, etc. to come to our matinee performance as tickets will not be required at that time. For the evening performance, doors open at 5:30pm for families and students are asked to go to their classroom at that time. We ask that families stay for the duration of the concert which will last approximately 1 hour.

## December 5<sup>th</sup> PD-Day & Parent-Teacher Conferences

Parent-Teacher Interviews will be conducted in person from 1-3pm and 5-7pm on Thursday, December 5th. As always, if you are not able to meet during this time, please reach out to your child's teacher(s) to arrange a phone call, or another meeting time that is mutually convenient. Teaching Specialists will be available by dropping in. Our percentage specialists will be available in the afternoon (please see the table below):

Percentage Specialist Availability December 5 <sup>th</sup> 1pm-3pm	
<b>Lauren Bourgeois</b> Core French	<b>Noor Humadi</b> (English as an Additional Language)
<b>Brenda Haughian</b> Music	<b>Kim Hollebone</b> (Literacy Support Teacher)

## Holiday Concert Gift Basket:

At both holiday concerts on December 5<sup>th</sup>, we will be selling tickets for a Spa Gift Basket. There will be one draw at 7:30pm at the end of the evening concert. If the winner is not in attendance at that time, they will be notified. Please consider bringing cash to purchase tickets: 1 for \$2, 3 for \$5. Thank-you! The funds raised will be used by the Star Fund, a school administered fund to assist some of our St. Stephen's families, especially at this holiday time. Thank you for your support.

## Dressing for Colder Weather



It is important for students to get daily fresh air and have an opportunity to play outside. It is very windy most days but with proper clothing we will be able to stay comfortable outdoors! Rain/Snow pants, gloves/mittens and a tuque (as well as a change of clothes) are always a safe bet to keep in the backpack as well. Ensuring your child(ren) come to school dressed for the weather is essential to a great day at school. Please let us know if we can help in obtaining any of the above items by contacting the office.

## Footwear at school

As we work together to create a safe and comfortable environment for our students, we kindly ask that Crocs not be worn to school or worn inside the school. While they are a popular choice for their convenience, they can pose safety concerns, especially on slippery surfaces or during physical activities. Closed-toe, secure footwear helps ensure students can move safely in the halls and participate fully in all activities. A pair of winter boots is also essential for students as they will keep feet warm and dry. Thank you for your understanding and support in keeping our school a safe place for everyone.

## Winter is Coming: Guidelines for Inclement Weather

Making the decision to alter the regular operations of school and/or school buses due to inclement weather is

never an easy task. To learn more about how the Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) makes this call, visit [https://www.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/2023-11/hrce\\_weather\\_guidelines\\_updated.pdf](https://www.hrce.ca/sites/default/files/2023-11/hrce_weather_guidelines_updated.pdf)

### **When is the decision made?**

HRCE's goal is to make the decision as close to 6 a.m. as possible.

### **A 6 a.m. announcement could be:**

- All schools are delayed in opening by two hours and all bus pickups are delayed by two hours; or
- All schools are open, but some or all buses are not operating for the day; or
- Some schools (either individually or by family) are closed for the day; or
- All schools are closed for the day.

If the weather deteriorates through the school day, the HRCE can decide to dismiss early. In the event of an early dismissal, the decision will be communicated as close to 11 a.m. as possible.

### **An 11 a.m. dismissal means:**

- Bused students will be picked up two hours earlier than their regular dismissal time; and
- Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour.

### **How will families be notified?**

- Families will receive an email and text message (*opt-in is required: text Y to 978338*)\*
- Check our website at [www.hrce.ca](http://www.hrce.ca)
- Follow us on X at [@HRCE\\_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS)
- Call the HRCE information line at 902-464-INFO (4636)
- All local radio stations are informed

**Please Note:** students in Grades Primary to 6 will not be released from school until parents/guardians or designates have been notified by the school.

[Click here](#) for a printable PDF of our guidelines.

*\*If you know someone who is NOT a parent/guardian who would like to receive an email and/or text message, let them know they can sign up here: <https://www.hrce.ca/families/cancellations/subscribe-notifications>*

## **Head Lice**

Head lice and/or nits do commonly occur in children of this age. It is our practice to keep parents informed when cases of head lice are reported. Please check your children's hair periodically for any signs regarding this issue. Reducing the frequency of head lice incidents is best accomplished through cooperative efforts between home and school. For more information:

<https://www.nshealth.ca/sites/default/files/documents/pamphlets/07135.pdf>

## **Mabel's Labels PTA Fundraising Campaign**



Winter coats, snow pants, hats, mitts and boots can be a nightmare to keep track of for any family. Mabel's Labels personalized labels and stamps can help you keep track of your child's things! The labels are laundry, dishwasher and microwave safe, and easy to apply. Visit Mabel's Labels at [www.mabelslabels.com](http://www.mabelslabels.com), click "Support a Fundraiser" and type "St. Stephens Elementary School PTA (Halifax)" into the search bar. Place your order, and it will be shipped directly to your home

