

October 2025 Newsletter

St. Stephen's Elementary School

3669 Highland Ave., Halifax, NS B3K 4J9

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

ADMIN. ASSISTANT: Heather Cosgrove-Smith



Principal's Message

As we welcome October, I want to take a moment to celebrate the fantastic start we've had to our school year. September was filled with energy, learning, and connection—and I am so grateful to everyone for helping make it such a positive beginning.

Our students did a wonderful job during our safety drills, showing confidence and care for each other. We also had an incredible turnout for the PTA BBQ and Curriculum Night—thank you to all who joined us. It was inspiring to see families, staff, and students come together to share in such meaningful moments. Pink Shirt Day was another highlight, as our students and staff stood united against bullying, reminding us of the kindness and respect at the heart of our school.

This year, we are especially excited to begin implementing our new Matrix of School-Wide Expectations. This shared framework helps us set clear, positive expectations for behavior across all areas of the school, building consistency and reinforcing the respectful, caring culture we value so deeply.

This October, we are eager to honor Mi'kmaq History Month, focusing on A'tukwemk aq A'tukowinu'k – Storytelling and Storytellers, which will allow students to deepen their understanding of the rich stories and traditions that shape our history. Our Grade 6 students will soon be taking part in their Provincial Assessments in literacy and math, and we're so proud of the effort they have been putting in to prepare.

We're also excited to welcome families to our Book Fair—a wonderful chance to inspire a love of reading and grow our school library resources. Toward the end of the month, after Thanksgiving, we'll round out October with some Halloween fun at the Sock Hop and then celebrate together at our Mi'kmaq Heritage Assembly. And before facing

Thank you for your ongoing support, encouragement, and partnership. Together, we're creating a community where every child feels safe, respected, and inspired to learn. I wish you and your family a joyful October filled with learning, laughter, and connection.

Yours in Learning,

Dave Madgett, Principal and Nicole Gerrard, Vice-Principal

Upcoming Events

Wednesday, Oct. 1st

- Treaty Day

Friday, Oct. 3rd

- 1:45pm Terry Fox Run/Walk

Oct. 6th-10th

- Scholastic Book Fair

Wednesday, Oct. 8th

- Picture Day
- 3:45pm Gorsebrook X-Country Meet

Monday, Oct. 13th

- Thanksgiving Day (School Closed)

Oct. 14th-17th

- Grade 6 Provincial assessment

Tuesday, Oct. 14th

- 5:15pm SAC Meeting
- 6:30pm PTA Meeting

Friday, Oct. 20-24

- Diwali

Thursday, October 23rd

- Halloween SockHop

Friday, October 24th

- Provincial Conference Day

Wednesday, October 29th

- Mi'kmaq Heritage Assembly

Friday, October 31st

- Halloween



What's New

School Lunch Program



To order please go to <https://nslunch.ca/>.

Universal Screening in Reading for Grade 1 and 2 students

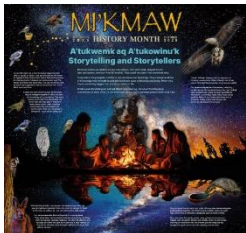
In September, classroom teachers spend time getting to know their students and who they are as learners. Schools will be using Universal Screening in Reading for Grade 1 and 2 students. This is one of the many ways teachers will assess learning.

What is Universal Screening in Reading? It's a short (1–5 minute) activity that helps us see how your child is developing key reading skills. Think of it as a quick check-in on their reading journey, like looking at a map to see where they are and what might help them move forward.

Why do we do it? The screening helps teachers understand children's strengths and where they may need extra support. This allows us to plan instruction, so students get what they need to succeed in reading.

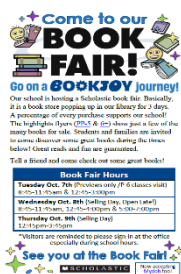
Important to know: This is not a test. There's no "pass" or "fail." It's a way for teachers to ensure students are supported in their learning.

October is Mi'kmaq Heritage Month



Food gathers us together for celebration, nourishment and comfort. It is central to our ceremonies, considered part of our medicines, and key to our resiliency. Sharing freely honours each other and blesses our families and communities so no one is harmed or struggles. The long-ago treaties with the first plants and animals of Mi'kma'ki require us to love and to protect msit no'kmaq (all our relations). Living through the values and ways of netukulimk over thousands of years has carried our communities through times of abundance and scarcity. For more info please visit: <https://mikmaqhistorymonth.com/>

Scholastic Book Fair



Our school is hosting a Scholastic book fair. Basically, it is a book store popping up in our library for 3 days. A percentage of every purchase supports our school! The highlights flyers (PP-5 & 6+) show just a few of the many books for sale. Students and families are invited to come discover some great books during the times below! Great reads and fun are guaranteed. Tell a friend and come check out some great books! If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Makmillen at jmakmillen@hrce.ca.

The Gorsebrook Gr 3-6 Elementary School X-C Meet



The Gorsebrook Gr 3-6 Elementary School X-C Meet will be held on Wednesday, October 8 at 3:45pm-approximately 4:30 (Rain date on October 10).

Race Order:

- Grade 6 Girls then Boys (2 laps, same course on the periphery of the field, ending by tennis courts)
- Grade 3 Girls then Boys (1 laps)
- Grade 4 Girls then Boys (2 laps)
- Grade 5 Girls then Boys (2 laps)

Permission have been handed out to students this week. Please contact Mr. Tully at tullyr@hrce.ca for more information.

PTA Participatory Budget News



Our St. Stephen's Elementary School Parent Teacher Association applied for and was successful in obtaining grant funding as part of the HRM District 8 Participatory Budget. requesting funding to purchase equipment to use for fundraising events. The equipment includes commercial grade snow cone, cotton candy and popcorn machines as well as a bingo ball blower. We thank everyone who made the trip to Maritime Hall on Curriculum Night to vote for our proposal!

Label, Label, Label



If you were at Curriculum Night, you no doubt saw the accumulation that has already started in our lost and found. Please label your child's clothing, boots, shoes, lunch bag, school bag, hat, etc. Our PTA has an ongoing fundraiser with Mabel's Labels. Mabel's Labels are laundry, dishwasher and microwave safe, and easy to apply. Visit Mabel's Labels at 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. The PTA receives a 20% commission on orders placed through this fundraiser.