

February Newsletter



St. Stephen's Elementary School

3669 Highland Ave., Halifax, NS B3K 4J9

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

ADMIN. ASSISTANT: Otilie Hayes



Principal's Message

We have had an amazing January here at St. Stephen's Elementary School. Our enrollment continues to grow (it currently sits at 324 students). This month we celebrated Literacy week. Throughout the week, our students were challenged to read 500 books (they collectively read 1273 books and have consequently earned a dance), classes read/wrote recipes and created them in our kitchen, and many classes had guest readers come to read. During our month end assembly, students got to hear the reading of *The Adventure of Jordi & Jordan* (the story composed by all classes and illustrated by students across all grade levels) and, finally we kicked off the Coins 4 Books fundraiser with the announcement of 3 twonie treat Friday's starting on February 2nd.

So here we go, rolling right into February which is always a busy and fun month in school! This month, preparations get under way for the 2024-25 school year, beginning with Pre-Primary and Primary registration (more info to share further in the newsletter). Shubenacadie Sam will make an appearance on Friday, February 2nd to tell us whether we will see an early spring or face six more weeks of winter!

Finally, this month we get to celebrate the rich African heritage in our community, our province and in our country! The 2024 African Heritage Month theme is Our Smiles, Our Joy, Our Resilience as African Nova Scotians.

While February is a short month, this time of year can be difficult for students and families. The weather can be cold, rainy, icy, snowy and everything in between. If there is anything we can do to help, if attending school is becoming increasingly difficult, please do not hesitate to reach out to us!

Thank you for all your continued support and have a fabulous February.

Yours in Learning,

Dave Madgett, Principal and Nicole Gerrard, Vice-Principal

Upcoming Events

Thursday, February 1

- African Heritage Month Begins
- February is Registration Month

Friday, February 2

- Groundhog Day
- Twonie Treat Friday (Gummy Candy)

Friday, February 9th

- Twonie Treat Friday (Chocolate Treat)

Saturday, February 10

- Lunar New Year

Tuesday, February 13

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

Wednesday, February 14

- Valentine's Day Dance
12:45pm P-3, 1:45pm 4-6
- Pink Triangle Day

Thursday, February 15

- 7pm PTA Oval Skate

Friday, February 16

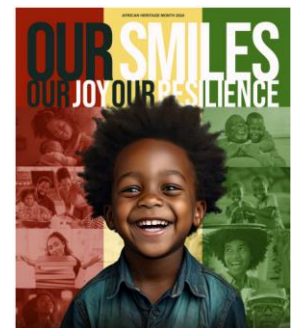
- Twonie Treat Friday (Freezie)
- Random Act of Kindness Day

Monday, February 19

- **Heritage Day (School closed)**—Honoring William Hall

Wednesday, February 28th

- African Heritage Celebration
Month End Assembly



What's New

Celebrate African Heritage Month 2024

The theme for African Heritage Month 2024 is "Our Smiles, Our Joy, Our Resilience as African Nova Scotians." This month-long celebration is dedicated to recognizing and honoring the history and culture of people of African descent. The theme coincides with the final year of the United Nations' International Decade for People of African Descent (DPAD) 2015-2024, which aims to promote global cooperation in support of people of African descent, raise awareness, and acknowledge their full and equal participation in all aspects of society.

Nova Scotia is home to more than 50 historic African Nova Scotian communities with a rich, deep, and complex history that spans more than 400 years. African Heritage Month is an excellent opportunity to celebrate and showcase the culture, accomplishments, and contributions of African Nova Scotians, both past and present. Learn more [here](#).

Looking for ways to recognize and celebrate African Heritage Month?

- Attend events happening throughout the month at your local [Halifax Public Library](#).
- While you're at the library, [borrow books](#) that will inspire the whole family to learn more about African heritage.
- Visit local heritage sites, such as the [Black Cultural Centre](#), [the Africville Museum](#), and the [Black Loyalist Heritage Centre](#).

February is PrePrimary & Primary Registration Month

Do you have a child who will be starting pre-primary or primary this fall? It's time to register!

Registration for the 2024-25 school year begins on February 1. To ensure we have the right staff and supports in place for September, it's important that we gather enrolment numbers now.

Tip: Before you begin, make sure you have the following documents in electronic form (image, PDF or Word document):

Proof of identity/age with one of the following: birth certificate, passport, immigration papers, or legal adoption papers) if you are new to the HRCE;

- Proof of home address (a recently dated official government or utility document with your current address that includes your name and date, such as water bill, power bill, internet bill, home fuel bill, a tax receipt, property assessment or a mortgage contract); and
- Nova Scotia Health Card or Canadian Province Health Card or, for non-citizens while in Canada, proof of Medical Insurance Information.

Visit the [HRCE website](#) for more information and to enrol your child today through PowerSchool Enrollment!

Don't have a child to register? Maybe you know someone who does! Please help us spread the word and pass this information on to friends, neighbours or relatives who will be looking to register for the fall.

Dressing for Colder Weather

We continue to have students coming to school unprepared for the colder weather. Please insist that your

child(ren) come to school with a winter jacket, hat, mittens/gloves, socks, boots and snow pants. If you need any support getting any of these items, please let Mr. Madgett/ Ms. Gerrard know. We will be heading out daily and more frequently. It is very windy most days but with proper clothing we will be able to stay comfortable outdoors! **Please ensure your child(ren) come to school dressed for the weather.**

Slow down in school zones






To ensure our students' safety, here are a few reminders for drivers navigating school zones.



- Follow school zone speed limits whenever children are present. This always applies, not just during school hours.
- Be prepared to stop for a school bus at any time.
- Remember to stop whenever you approach a stopped school bus with its red lights flashing, regardless of the direction of travel or which lane the bus is in.
- Give yourself extra time during your morning commute.
- Always watch for pedestrians. There are more kids walking, riding, and getting dropped off in school zones.
- Always obey crossing guards.
- Avoid distractions while driving.



At-home reading tips for caregivers

-  **Look at your child's books** with them. Discuss the pictures and build vocabulary by talking about new words.
-  **Talk with your child about their books.** Ask questions about the story and encourage your child to ask their own questions.
-  **Make reading aloud a regular part of your routine** – just 15 minutes each day can make a big difference in raising a reader.
-  **Discuss examples that help them relate** to what they're reading. Connect the story to your child's world.
-  **Connect with your child's teacher** for more suggestions on how to support reading at home.



Lunch Program—Healthy Hunger

For families wishing to order lunch and/or are new to the school, we have a lunch ordering option for Tuesday and Thursday. If you need to get set up to order please head to our website for more information. Here is the link [Healthy Hunger Lunch Ordering.](#)

Mabel's Labels PTA Fundraising Campaign



One of the ways we reduce the size of our lost and found is being able to identify who the piece of clothing belongs to. Mabel's Labels personalized labels and stamps can help you and our school staff keep track of your child's things (i.e. black or navy blue snow pants)! The 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. Questions? Contact Allison @ anolting@gmail.com

SSES PTA invites you for an Oval Skate Meet-up



Calling all skaters! Warm up to winter by meeting your fellow school friends at the Emera Oval for an ice skate on February 15, at 7pm-9pm. Bring your skates, gloves and CSA approved multi-impact hockey helmet. Need gear? Rent for free at the oval (bring valid photo identification). Students must be supervised by parents / guardians (no student drop-offs). Look for SSES PTA volunteers on the benches for a drink and treat. There are buses on Robie Street from our neighborhood to Quinpool Rd, which is a short walk to the oval at Halifax North Common (corner of North Park St and Cogswell St). There is also parking around the commons or adjacent side streets. For more information contact: 902-414-7156 or SSESHalifaxPTA@gmail.com