

Hawthorn Elementary

NEWSLETTER

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January 2025



Dear Families,

Happy New Year! We hope you had a relaxing, peaceful holiday season. We are excited to welcome our students back to school and get right back into the swing of things. Our Hawthorn team is dedicated to supporting the success and well-being of every student.

We are incredibly proud of all that our students have accomplished so far this school year. There's so much exciting learning ahead, and we can't wait to see the growth and achievements that 2025 will bring for our students and school community!

Just a reminder that school starts promptly at 9:00 am. Being on time helps your child kick off the day on a positive and productive note, and we truly appreciate your help in making that happen!

Wishing you all good health and happiness in 2025!

Warm regards,

Ms. Gourlay and Ms. Bambury

Upcoming Dates:

- January 3-First Day back for students
- January 8-SAC meeting @ 6:00 pm School Library
- January 8-Home and School Meeting @ 7:00 pm in School Library
- January 27-Family Literacy Day

Thank you!

- Thank you for taking the time to complete our family survey. Your valuable feedback plays a crucial role in helping us enhance and strengthen our school community.
- Thank you for your generous support of the Spirit of Giving. Your food donations were delivered to Margaret's House and is always appreciated, especially this time of year.
- A heartfelt thank you for your incredible support of the book fair! Thanks to your purchases, time, and efforts, we added nearly \$1,000 worth of new Scholastic books to our school library and earned additional reward dollars for future purchases. Ms. Copeman also used some rewards to buy locally from stores, enriching our library even further. Special thanks to families who gifted books through our Classroom Wish List program—your generosity makes a big difference! This event was a wonderful success, and we deeply appreciate your dedication to nurturing students' love of reading.

Hawthorn Calendar

Now you can access our [Hawthorn Calendar](#) on our Hawthorn website.

Hawthorn Home and School Association

The Hawthorn Home and School Association is a volunteer, nonprofit organization of family members and school staff. Membership is open to any interested parent, guardian, or staff member. The next meeting is **January 8th at 7pm** in the school library. If you can't make the meeting but would like to be added to the distribution list, please connect with Lisa: lisas.power@gmail.com

Schools Plus information-see attached poster

SchoolsPlus is partnering with Legal Aid NS to offer free legal consults for families. The next session will be **January 21st 12:30pm-3pm at Dartmouth High School**. These sessions are registered at least one week in advance. Transportation can be arranged if required. Please reach out to Juliana Pontes via email at jpontes@hrce.ca or by phone at (902)240-0832 for more information. **The deadline to register for the next session is January 14th.**

Clothing and Winter Attire

With the cold weather upon us, we would like to remind families and students of the importance of dressing appropriately for the weather including hats, mittens, and snowpants

(extra mitts are always a good idea too in the event of mittens getting lost or wet). As the weather changes we ask that all students pack a change of clothes in the event that their clothing gets wet or dirty/muddy while going outside during recess or lunch.

Important weather reminders

Did you know? HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the regular operations of schools and school buses in the event of severe or inclement weather.

It is HRCE's goal to communicate any changes to the regular operations of schools and/or buses as close to 6:00 a.m. as possible. A 6:00 a.m. announcement could be:

- All schools are delayed in opening by two hours and 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 weather deteriorates, or is forecasted to worsen throughout the morning, an 11:00 a.m. announcement could be:

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

How will I find out?

- By email to the addresses in PowerSchool
- By text message, if you have opted-in. If you aren't sure if you have opted-in, text Y to the following number: 978338
- On [our website](#)
- On [X \(formerly Twitter\)](#)
- On [Instagram](#)



It's important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit www.hrce.ca/families/cancellations.

Lunar New Year

Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, will be celebrated on January 29. It marks the beginning of the Year of the Snake, an animal sign that symbolizes wisdom, intuition, and renewal. It's a time for families to come together, honour their ancestors, and welcome the new year with hopes of prosperity and happiness.



January 27 is Family Literacy Day

Did you know? January 27 is Family Literacy Day! This special day is meant to raise awareness about the importance of reading and engaging in other literacy-related activities as a family.






This year's theme is "Learn to be Green, Together!" Make a pledge as a family to learn ways to be greener. Use less electricity, commute together, and reuse items. Being green together is a fun way to learn as a family while being kind to the environment.



Raise a Reader



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.



Computational Fluency

This year as part of our Student Success Plan in Mathematics, students are immersed in fact fluency activities and practice every day. Read to find out more!



What does it mean to be fluent with math facts?

Information for families and caregivers

DID YOU KNOW? Children are fluent when they demonstrate:

- Accuracy**
 - Correctly solving a problem
- Flexibility**
 - The ability to think about a problem in more than one way and to adapt or adjust thinking as necessary
- Efficiency**
 - Solving a problem in a reasonable amount of time



MYTH: Math today is so different

FACT: While the math itself hasn't changed, the focus of math instruction has shifted to ensure students are actively engaged in developing an understanding of the skills and concepts. Representing concepts using models to develop strategies and exercising critical thinking is a much more effective way to build understanding.



MYTH: Memorization is the best way to master basic facts.

FACT: Children may have memorized basic facts, however, they may not have a strategy to solve the particular fact. Memorized facts can be forgotten, but when a strategy is understood, children hang on to it forever.



MYTH: Children who have memorized the facts won't be challenged.

FACT: The goal is not to memorize facts, but to develop a range of strategies to apply to more complex concepts such as multi-digit computations, decimals and fractions. Developing strategies and an understanding of when to use these appropriately, asks children to think at higher levels.



MYTH: Timed tests help children master facts.

FACT: Timed tests do not assess fluency, only accuracy and efficiency. As well, research tells us that timed tests can lead to the development of anxiety around mathematics.

Questions to support fact fluency conversations with children

- How did you solve it?
- How do you know it is correct?
- Is there another way you could solve it?
- If someone didn't know the answer to _____, how would you help them to figure it out?
- What strategy can you use to find that fact?
- How is ____ like ____? How are they different? (example: How is 2×7 like 4×7 ?)

Reminders

- Please, do not send **nut or peanut products** to school (this includes Nutella products).
- Our school is a **scent-free zone!** We ask that all parents, guardians, and visitors refrain from using scented products such as perfumes, colognes, and heavily scented lotions when on at school. Many of our students and staff members have sensitivities or allergies to certain scents. Your cooperation and understanding in this matter are greatly appreciated.
- It is helpful to have a complete **change of clothes** in your child's backpack just in case of mud, puddles, or spills and it may save you a trip in the middle of your day.
- Please do not bring **dogs** onto school grounds. If you do bring your dog, please stay on the sidewalk and not on school property.
- Please ensure that your child has **indoor shoes** for school and wears outdoor shoes/boots to help keep our school clean.
- Students are not permitted to use **cell phones** during the school day. If students bring cellphones to school, they must be turned off and in their backpacks for the entire school day.