

## Hawthorn Elementary February Newsletter



Dear Hawthorn Families,

February is African Heritage Month, and Hawthorn is excited for all the learning and celebrations we have planned. Throughout the month, students will participate in assemblies and classroom visits from community members.

Last week, parents and guardians of Grade 6 students were emailed the results of the Grade 6 Provincial Assessments written in the fall. Please reach out to your child's classroom teacher if you have any questions regarding the results. If you did not receive the results, please contact the principal.

Families are asked to partner with the school by keeping family pets off school property during school hours. In addition, if you need to pick up or connect with your child during the school day, please check in at the office upon arrival.

We are looking forward to our upcoming Bingo Night on February 12. We are currently accepting donations of prizes for the event. Suggested donations include gift cards or new prizes for parents and children (valued at \$20–\$30). We are also accepting canteen donations such as chips, pop, water, juice boxes, and candy. Please drop off donations at the school by Monday, February 9, to allow the Home and School Association time to organize the event.

**Please note the Home and School Meeting this month is Tuesday February 3rd at 6pm.**

Thank you for your continued support in making Hawthorn a great place for our students to learn.

Sincerely,  
Administration  
Hawthorn School

Ms. Waterhouse and Ms. Bambury

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## UPDATES from the Home and School

### **BIG BOX FUNDRAISER**

**Dear Families,**

**We're thrilled to kick off a new fundraiser at our school - The Big Box of Cards! This campaign is a fun way to support our school and each box offers great value your family and friends will love.**

**Card boxes sell for \$35 each and the Candles box \$40.**

- 35 All Occasion cards**
- 35 All birthday cards**
- Holiday Box**
- Big Box of Candles**

**Our campaign will run from February 2 to February 20th. You can order the boxes through School Cash online ( [SchoolCashOnline.com: Welcome](#) ).**

**If we sell 75+ boxes, the top-selling class will win a pizza party**

**For every 3 boxes your family sells, you'll be entered into a draw to win one of four \$25 gift cards (if our school sells 150+ boxes)**

**If we hit 400 boxes, we'll also draw for a Samsung 8" Tablet. There's no limit — the more boxes you sell, the more entries you get!**

### **Product Preview Links**

- [All Occasion Box](#)**
- [Holiday Box](#)**
- [Candle Box](#)**
- [Full Collection Overview](#)**

**Thank you for supporting our students through this exciting initiative. Your participation makes a difference — and we hope you enjoy sharing these beautiful card sets with your friends and loved ones!**

## **BINGO NIGHT**

🎉 Family Bingo Night – February 12! 🎉

Get ready for an evening of fun, laughter, and a little friendly competition! Join us on Thursday, February 12 for Family Bingo Night in the school gym. Doors open at 6:00 PM, and the first game begins at 6:20 PM.

Bring the whole family—there will be great prizes, snacks for purchase, and plenty of excitement. All school ages are welcome, and no experience is needed. Come out, relax, and enjoy a great night with our school community!

We can't wait to see you there!

**Regards,**  
**Hawthorn Home and School**

### **Important Dates:**

**January 30: Mi'kmaq elder Charlotte Bernard 9:30 (Pr-2) 10:00 (3-6)- Shared knowledge about Two eyed seeing and the talking circle.**

### **Important dates to remember in February**

**February is African Heritage Month- Note Speakers and presentations are in purple. If we schedule other speakers we will notify families.**

February is Registration Month

**3: Tia Upshaw - Presentation- From where you are to where you meant to be.  
9:30am**

**3: SAC - 6pm and Home and School meeting - all are welcome to attend**

**6: Julia Tynes Pop and R and B Artist -Musical interactive presentation on  
Finding your Voice 1:10**

**9th- 13- Lock Down Drill #2 will occur during this week.**

**12: HSA Family event (Bingo Night) 6pm**

**13: Chairs and tables to be picked up.**

**16: Nova Scotia Heritage Day - no classes all schools**

**17: Lunar New Year**

**17: Ms. Barro-Ralph class- Presentation Krista Drummond - parent/community member/social worker ( Speaking about Community, Inclusion and Voices for people)**

**27: Bradley Daye Full School Presentation 9:30am- Business owner and CEO- Presenting on the strength of empathy**

### **Lunch Monitors Needed**

We are currently looking for lunch monitors to support our students. If you are available to help, even once a week or a few times a month, it would make a huge difference.

Please contact Ms. Urquhart at the main office if you are interested or would like more information.

Thank you for helping support our school community!

### **February is Registration Month**

Do you have or know a child who will be starting Pre Primary or Primary this fall? It's time to register!

Registration for the 2026-27 school year begins on Monday, February 2. 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 with one of the following: 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, a mortgage contract or a residential lease agreement

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.

**February is African Heritage Month-** African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia is a time to recognize and celebrate the rich history, vibrant culture, and lasting contributions of people of African descent in our province. This year's theme, "**Strength in Unity – Moving Forward with Purpose, Prosperity, Power and Progress**," reminds us of the importance of coming together as a community, learning from one another, and moving forward with shared purpose.

In our schools, African Heritage Month provides meaningful opportunities for students to explore African Nova Scotian histories and experiences, deepen their understanding of our shared past, and reflect on the values of respect, inclusion, and belonging. Through classroom learning, discussions, and activities connected to this year's theme, students are encouraged to appreciate diversity, build empathy, and recognize the strength that comes from unity. These experiences help foster welcoming school communities and inspire students to contribute positively to a more inclusive and equitable future for all.

### **Open your home to an international student!**

Have you considered opening your home to an international student?

HRCE's International Services welcomes students from all over the world who would like to attend schools in our region. Hosting a student in your home can be an enriching and rewarding experience. We're looking for warm and caring families like yours to provide them with a home away from home.

Hosting an international student is a once-in-a-lifetime experience that gives your family the opportunity to bring the world home. For students, it's a way to learn about the Canadian way of life.

As a host, your family would be matched with a student who will attend your neighbourhood school and participate in your daily routines.

What you can expect:

- Host families receive a tax-free monthly stipend to help cover hosting expenses (\$825 current, \$875 effective September)
- Students stay for periods of three to 10 months
- Ongoing support is provided by an experienced Homestay Coordinator
- You will learn about and communicate with your student before their arrival

Learn more [here](#) or contact:

HRCE International Services

(902) 464-2000 ext. 2548

[hostastudent@hrce.ca](mailto:hostastudent@hrce.ca)

Please share this message with anyone who may be interested.

Thank you! Gracias. Merci. Xie-Xie. Danke. Arigato. Grazie. Obrigado. Kamsa-Hamnida. Kawp-Kun-Ka. Shukran. Teşekkür Ederim.

HRCE International Services

### **February 16 is Heritage Day**

Nova Scotia Heritage Day is celebrated on Monday, February 16, and provides an opportunity for students and families to learn more about the people, stories, and events that have shaped our province. Each year, Heritage Day honours a notable Nova

Scotian, and in 2026 we recognize Joseph William Comeau, an important Acadian poet, writer, and cultural leader.

Joseph William Comeau is remembered for his contributions to Acadian literature and for helping to preserve and promote Acadian language, identity, and culture in Nova Scotia. His work reflected the everyday lives, resilience, and traditions of Acadian communities, and his legacy continues to influence Acadian culture today.

Heritage Day provides us with an opportunity to explore Nova Scotia's diverse history and to better understand how individuals from different backgrounds have contributed to our shared story. Learning about Joseph William Comeau helps students appreciate the richness of Acadian heritage and the importance of preserving culture, language, and community.

## **Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish**

Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish, a free community event hosted by Unplugged Canada at St. Margaret's Bay Elementary, is available both in person and virtually.

Designed for caregivers and educators, this session will explore how early smartphone and social media use impacts children's development and the latest research, practical strategies, safer alternatives, and age-appropriate boundaries to support healthy childhoods.

Join us! Thriving Offline: How Delaying Smartphones Can Help Kids Flourish

- Tuesday, February 24, 2026, at 6:30 p.m.
- St. Margaret's Bay Elementary - 24 Ridgewood Dr, Head of St Margaret's Bay, NS
- Please register for in-person or virtual [here](#).

## **Two Truths & AI**

Two Truths & AI is a free, interactive activity from Common Sense Education that helps students learn how to tell the difference between real and AI-generated content.

Through guided examples, students practice asking good questions and thinking critically about what they see online. This resource can also be a helpful way for parents and caregivers to build their own understanding of AI and media literacy alongside their children. Learn more [here](#).

## **Planning for Inclement Weather**

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 busses 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:

- Bussed 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 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 the HRCE website](#)
- [On Instagram](#)

It's important to always have a plan in place for childcare in the event of any cancellation. Please remember: As a parent or guardian you always have the choice of whether or not to send your child to school.

For more information on how HRCE manages during inclement weather, visit [hrce.ca/families/cancellations](http://hrce.ca/families/cancellations).

## Power Outage Information for Families

As we move into the winter months, we want to share how decisions are made when a school experiences a power outage.

Our priority is always to keep schools open safely when possible. A power outage does not automatically mean classes are cancelled – even if it happens during the school day. The decision depends on when power is expected to be restored. Here's what happens:

- When a school loses power, HRCE's Operations Team contacts Nova Scotia Power to gather available details on the cause and an estimated restoration time.
- Once we have this information, we consider:
- Before school starts: Have buses begun their routes? If so, we wait until students arrive before making a decision. If classes are cancelled, elementary families will be contacted before dismissal.
- During the school day: How close is dismissal? What is the temperature in the building? Does the school rely on power for water or septic systems? These factors, among others, help us decide whether to stay open or close. Often, power returns faster than we could safely send students home.

If classes are cancelled: HRCE will notify families by email and text.

- Families of elementary students will also receive a phone call before dismissal.

Deciding to close schools during a power outage is never simple, but safety is always our top priority. We understand that cancellations can be inconvenient, and our goal is to keep students learning in class whenever possible.

More information about school cancellations for any reason can be found [here](#).