

EAST ST. MARGARET'S ELEMENTARY

monthly newsletter



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SEPTEMBER 2025

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear ESM Families,

We're ready and excited for this school year!

It was such a pleasure to meet so many students and families at Curriculum Night—thank you for the warm welcome and for taking the time to connect. Your energy and involvement set a wonderful tone for the year ahead!

Our staff have been hard at work getting everything ready for the first weeks of school, and we couldn't be more excited to welcome your child(ren) back! A huge shout-out to Mr. Norm, our amazing caretaker, whose hard work has made our school sparkle. We're all set for a fantastic start to the year!

As the new principal, I'm thrilled to be joining this vibrant school community. Over the past few weeks, I've had the chance to connect with our dedicated staff, super students, and fabulous families and begin to understand what makes this school so special. We are all working together and routines are underway!

Staying Connected

As always, open communication is key. Together, we make a strong team — supporting the social, emotional, and academic growth of your child(ren).

I've included a lot of important information in this newsletter to help everyone get off to a smooth start. I'll be following up with more updates in September as we settle into the school year.

Looking forward to connecting with all of our families soon!

All the best,
Wendi Tekamp
Principal

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

Stand Up Against Bullying Day - WEAR PINK!

SEPTEMBER 26, 2025

Every Child Matters - WEAR ORANGE!

SEPTEMBER 29, 2025

Professional Development Day for Teachers
NO SCHOOL

SEPTEMBER 30, 2025

National Day for Truth & Reconciliation
NO SCHOOL

OCTOBER 2, 2025

School Picture Day!

UPCOMING SAFETY DRILLS

A number of safety drills will be conducted in the coming weeks to better prepare our students for any emergency situation that may happen at school. Most notably are the Lockdown and Hold & Secure drills that are scheduled in the next two weeks. Please note the information in the graphics below, which are also links to a more detailed information letter about the upcoming Lockdown and Hold & Secure drills. If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to reach out to the school office.

STOP Lockdown Procedure STOP

**DO THIS**

**NOT THIS**

- ✓ Follow the directions of the person in charge
- ✓ If you're in the hallway, go immediately to the nearest learning space
- ✓ Cover all windows and turn off lights
- ✓ Position students where they cannot be seen
- ✓ Turn off or silence cell phones
- ✓ Be silent and stay calm

- ✗ Do not respond to class change or dismissal bells
- ✗ Do not evacuate if the fire alarm sounds unless it is unsafe to stay
- ✗ Do not open the door, except to a pre-arranged person
- ✗ Do not leave the learning space for any reason
- ✗ Do not answer a knock at the door
- ✗ Do not open exterior school doors to anyone

*If you are in the restroom when a lockdown happens, hide in a stall and stay quiet.
The lockdown ends only when an administrator or designate opens the door.

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Hold & Secure Procedure

**DO THIS**

**NOT THIS**

- ✓ Follow the directions of the person in charge
- ✓ Go immediately to the nearest learning space
- ✓ Stay away from windows and doors
- ✓ Learning continues as usual
- ✓ Restrict movement in and out of the learning space

- ✗ Do not respond to class change or dismissal bells
- ✗ Do not attempt to leave the building
- ✗ Do not leave learning spaces unless instructed to do so
- ✗ Do not open exterior school doors to anyone

Please note:
Staff should keep classroom doors locked at all times to ensure safety in any potential emergency situations.

Halifax Regional Centre for Education

LUNCH MONITORS: WE ARE LOOKING FOR INDIVIDUALS TO FILL TWO 1-HOUR DAILY LUNCH MONITOR POSITIONS. IF YOU KNOW ANYONE WHO MAY BE INTERESTED PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE.

STUDENT RECORDS - DEMOGRAPHIC UPDATES

The Demographic Updates Form is available to families in the PowerSchool Parent Portal. This form should be updated by every family to ensure all information about your student(s) is current, including contacts, medical information, consents and demographics. **Even if there are no anticipated changes, please review this information and submit the form for all students in your family.** This information will then be reviewed by the school before updates are finalized. **The deadline to submit the form is October 6, 2025.**

STAND UP AGAINST BULLYING - SEPTEMBER 11

Each year, we recognize Stand Up Against Bullying Day on the second Thursday of September. This year, on Thursday, September 11, we will celebrate inclusivity, kindness and friendship. All HRCE school teams are focused on ensuring all students have a safe and welcoming environment in which to learn and thrive.

If you're able, we'd invite you to join us and wear pink on September 11 to take a Stand Against Bullying.

NATIONAL DAY FOR TRUTH & RECONCILIATION

Each year on September 30, National Day for Truth and Reconciliation honours the children who didn't return from residential schools, as well as survivors, their families, and communities.

Orange Shirt Day, led by Indigenous communities, aims to raise awareness about the inter-generational impacts of residential schools and allows us all to show our support for the Every Child Matters movement.

As there are no classes on Monday, September 29 and Tuesday, September 30, we welcome staff and students to wear orange on Friday, September 26.

USING BUSPLANNER

Everything you need to know about student transportation including eligibility, stop times and stop locations can be found on BusPlanner. Once you register and subscribe, you can choose to receive email and/or text message notifications on changes to routes, bus delays or cancellations.

To sign up, go to [BusPlanner](#) and click on Parent Portal. Follow the instructions to create an account.

Don't have a BusPlanner Parent Portal account? Need help logging in? Please contact the HRCE Student Transportation Team at transportation@hrce.ca or call 902-431-4723.

VISITOR POLICY

We welcome visitors to ESM, but for the safety and security of our school, staff, and students, we *require all visitors, including parents and guardians, to report to the office on arrival.* All visitors will be asked to sign-in for the duration of their visit.

Anyone wishing to participate in school activities such as the Breakfast Program, field trips, class activities, etc. must complete a Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search **AND** a Child Abuse Registry Search prior to doing so. You'll find links and instructions to both below:

1. [Criminal Record Check with Vulnerable Sector Search](#) - can be done online at the link above or through your local detachment. The local detachment requires a letter from ESM, which you can request from the school office at any time. Please provide a copy of the results to the school office.
2. [Child Abuse Registry Search](#) - must be completed online at the link above. Results will be mailed to your home, usually within 2 weeks. Please provide a copy of the results to the school office.