



Astral Drive Elementary

February 2026

Home of the Stars

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Important dates to remember in February

February is African Heritage Month

February is Registration Month! Please share the news: [HRCE Registration Updates](#)

- 12: Junior High Information Night – Mark your calendars and more information to come for Grade 6 families
- 13: Julie Tynes presents Motown for the students
- 16: Nova Scotia Heritage Day - no classes all schools
- 17: Lunar New Year
- 19: French Immersion Information Session for New Primary parents at 5:00pm
- 24: SAC/PTO Meeting 5pm

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.

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.

Lego and Board Games collecting dust?

Do you have Lego or Board Games collecting dust and would you like to share them? We would happily accept them for our lunchtime clubs and rainy-day classroom activities! Please send them with your child during February if you would like to rehome them. Thank you for your support!

Care Closet for Students

At Astral, we believe in caring for one another and supporting the well-being of students. To help all students feel comfortable, confident, and ready to learn, our school is creating a **Care Closet**.

The Care Closet will provide essential items students may need during the school day. There are many reasons a student might need these items, for example, running out of something at school or needing a change of clothing without having to disrupt parents at work.

The Care Closet is **available to all students** and will be accessible beginning **mid-February**.

If a student needs an item, they may speak with their classroom teacher, a trusted adult in the building, the Principal, Vice Principal, or Mrs. Greer. All requests will be handled **confidentially and respectfully**.

Teachers will share information about the Care Closet with students and may invite classroom discussions about what items could be helpful for students to have available.

Thank you for your continued support as we work together to ensure every student feels supported and cared for at school.

Traffic Circle

Please use the helpful school traffic circle poster to support safe and efficient drop-off and pick-up. Share the map with any family members or caregivers who may pick up your child.

Please click here for map: [Astral Drive Schools drop off/pick up circle](#)

French Immersion Parent Information Session

Parents of children entering Primary next year are invited to attend a French Immersion Information Session on **Wednesday, February 19 at 5:00pm in the library at Astral Drive Elementary**. This session will provide an overview of the French Immersion program so parents can determine if French Immersion is the right choice for their child. Interested families are encouraged to attend. We look forward to seeing you there!

Lice

Lice are common in elementary school. Please do your part by checking your child's hair regularly. Coordinating home and school efforts is the best way to prevent spread.

[How to Prevent, Find, and Treat Head Lice \(NSHA\)](#)

Lost and Found

We have a large collection of items! During the **second week of March** (right before March Break), items will be displayed in the alcove on the **Lakeshire Drive side**. Unclaimed items will be donated or added to the Care Closet.

New Updated School Lunches Are Coming!

Starting the week of January 26, the school lunch menu is getting a tasty refresh! Expect more fresh fruit, better side pairings, and some exciting new favourites like chicken fingers, quesadillas, egg roll bowls, and meatloaf! New items vary slightly by menu. If you cannot resolve an issue on your own and need some help to solve it, you can reach out to the school or email lunch@hrce.ca.

Book Fair Profits

Thanks to your incredible support, we raised **\$4,479.40!** These funds will go directly toward refreshing our school library and fostering a love of reading.

ADE Leadership Team

Some of our Leadership Team came up with the awesome idea of a Snow Patrol at recess and lunch and they've been amazing! They help others find safe places to play, lend a hand with shovelling, and look out for our school community. Thanks for the great idea, the teamwork, and for stepping up to help make our school an even better place!

Building Independence This Winter

Winter gear is a great way to build independence. Please support your child in learning the skills for dressing for the weather and managing their belongings. These skills build confidence and readiness to learn. Thank you!

Planning for Inclement Weather

HRCE takes great care when making the decision to alter the regular operations 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. An announcement could be:

- All schools are delayed in opening by two hours
 - Our delayed start is **10:30am** 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 are picked up two hours earlier than regular dismissal time at **12:25pm**;
- Walking students will be dismissed from their regular dismissal doors at **11:25am**.

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.

Early Dismissal - Parent Pick-Up Procedures

At **11:25AM** Parents/guardians will report to their regular classroom door to pick up their child.

Teachers will escort students to the door at 11:25am.

1. Pre-Primary pick up (Astral Drive Side).
2. Main Entrance (Astral Drive Side)
3. Back Doors (Lakeshire Drive Side)
4. Modular Doors (Lakeshire Drive Side)

Traffic circle will be closed during early dismissal days. Please Park on Astral Drive or Lakeshire Drive and walk to the doors to meet your child.

Please note: At any time and without advanced notice, if the hill leading to the traffic circle becomes slippery due to snow or icy conditions, it will be closed for everyone's safety.

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

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

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](#).

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](#).



Important Dates [Click here for HRCE 25-26 Calendar](#)

MARCH

- 12: PTO Event – Family Bingo
13: Elem/Middle/Jr assessment & evaluation day - no classes elem/middle/jr only
16-20: Spring Break - no classes all schools
Mar 23-April 2: Report cards sent home (Elem/middle/jr high)

APRIL

- 2: Elem/Middle/Jr progress conferences & Teacher Professional Practice & high school professional development day - no classes all schools
3: Good Friday - no classes all schools
6: Easter Monday - no classes all schools
29: Elem/Middle/Jr professional development day - no classes all schools

MAY

- 5: SAC/PTO Meeting 5pm
7: PTO Event
15: Black Excellence Day - Culturally Significant Day - schools open
18: Victoria Day - no classes all schools

JUNE

- 5: PTO Event – Spring Fling
21: National Indigenous Peoples Day - Culturally Significant Day
29: Assessment & evaluation day - no classes all schools
30: Last day of school year