

Good afternoon Sunnyside families;

As we finish the second week of February, school is busy and there are lots of exciting things going on in classrooms. Today, many classes did some special activities tied to Valentine's Day. Additionally, February is African Heritage Month, and classes are recognizing this through special events, projects and learning that emphasize the important contributions of African Nova Scotians to our province, country and the world. We are also learning facts with reflective questions in our daily announcements, and we will be having an assembly at the end of the month to allow our students to showcase their learning to the whole school.

In this message you will find information about our second lockdown drill, our search for volunteers to help draft a Home and School Association constitution, Nova Scotia Heritage Day, our Prep/Relief teachers, African Heritage Month, and an announcement from Mme Thompson

We want to wish everyone a fabulous long February Weekend.

Lockdown Drill # 2: Our lockdown drill was scheduled for Thursday, February 12th as we communicated in last week's message. In light of the tragic events from Tumbler Ridge in BC, we determined that it would be best to postpone this drill. We are planning to have it next Wednesday, February 18th. In addition, if your child needs any support following this event, please reach out to their teacher, Ms. Emily or our main office staff.

Home & School Association Constitution: Our Home & School Association is in the process of drafting a new constitution. We would like all parents/guardians to have an opportunity to contribute to this project. Please consider joining a team of people who will meet a few times beginning in March to get this important document written. If you are able and willing, please email Mme Thompson (cthompson@hrce.ca) to indicate your interest.

Powerschool Attendance: Thank you to all parents/guardians for being vigilant reporting your students' absence from school. We appreciate all your efforts. A reminder, if your child will be arriving late, you still report them absent for the entire day. Upon their arrival at school, we will change the "absent" to "late". Reporting absences helps us ensure that all of our students are safe. If you need any support with Powerschool attendance, please reach out to Ms. Tricia.

Nova Scotia 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.

Please remember that school is closed for Nova Scotia Heritage Day. Students will return to classes on Tuesday, February 17.

Support staff in the school: There are several staff at Sunnyside who work with students in addition to classroom and subject teachers. Over the next few weeks, we will be introducing you to these essential staff members. This week we introduce our prep relief teachers. You may hear your students talk about Ms. Gilks and/or Mme Anderson. These teachers support our students by doing a few periods a week with all classes to ensure that all classroom teachers get their required marking and preparation time. Ms. Gilks and Mme Anderson collaborate with classroom teachers to determine what they teach. Mme Anderson is also our Core French teacher, and she is able to support French language learning in our French Immersion classes.

Autism Nova Scotia Visit to Eaglewood: The Nova Scotia Inclusive Education Policy defines Inclusive education as "...a commitment to ensuring a high-quality, culturally and linguistically responsive and equitable education to support the well-being and achievement of every student. All students should feel that they belong in an inclusive school—accepted, safe, and valued—so they can best learn and succeed."

To continue our work to develop an inclusive, safe and accepting school culture, we have invited the Inclusion and Family Support Coordinator of Autism Nova Scotia to address our classes at Eaglewood. This presentation will promote social inclusion of all students and will be done in groups of 2 classes. If you have any questions, please reach out to Ms. Emily.

Announcement from Mme Thompson: After 32 years in education, beginning as a teacher in the HRCE, and the last 10 years as a principal including the amazing 3.5 years I have had the pleasure of working at Sunnyside Elementary, I will be retiring from education as of March 1, 2026. It has been an absolute privilege working with your children, watching them grow, and being a part of their early educational journeys. I leave with a heart full of gratitude and wish this incredible school community nothing but the best in the years to come.

Currently, the HRCE is working through the staffing process and as soon as we know anything about my replacement, we will communicate this with you.

Upcoming dates:

Feb. 1-28—Registration Month

Feb. 16—Heritage Day (no school)

Feb. 17—Lunar New Year

Feb. 19—Inspiration Republic Presentation for African Heritage Month for grades PP-2, Autism Nova Scotia to Eaglewood

Feb. 23—HSA meeting 6:30 Eaglewood

