



# Sycamore Lane NEWSLETTER

## **PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE**

### **Happy 2024 SLES Families!**

Welcome back to the school year. On behalf of the staff of SLES, we hope you all enjoyed a wonderful holiday season! All the best for you and your families as we begin 2024!

Along with the new year, I have some new plans for our school that will involve focusing on decreasing behaviors in our school and focusing more on student learning opportunities in classrooms. This will involve a partnership with families from home. I will be sending home more information on this during the 2<sup>nd</sup> week of January. For now, our focus will be on valuing the learning opportunities of all students in our school, so they have increased success with their learning. This partnership between home and school will be instrumental in the success of this plan. When information comes home next week, please feel free to contact me should you have any questions. Thank you in advance for your support.

### **Student Success Planning:**

We will be entering Cycle 2 of our school student success plan as we start back to school. I will be working with staff during our first staff meeting next week, at reflecting on what we accomplished from September – December and how we will focus our attention on our Literacy, Mathematics and Well-Being goals for students. We will look at various strategies and action steps we will take during the 2<sup>nd</sup> Cycle to improve student learning opportunities. Our goals remain the same: improving Literacy, Mathematics and Well-Being for all students. As we continue with these goals, we will reflect on our success for Cycle 1 and continue with additional action steps and strategies to continue with this work. We have completed a student survey with all students in Primary – Grade 5 around well-being and safety. The results will be looked at by staff and we will make decisions on our next steps to support students in our school.

### **Lunch Program Concerns:**

As we start back in 2024, I am asking for all families to have a discussion with their child/children on respectful behaviors in our lunchrooms. As was indicated in the last newsletter, there are concerns with disrespectful behaviors occurring during the lunch hour, both inside and outside times. This of course does not pertain to all students, however, a general discussion about school expectations and respectful behavior is helpful.

Some concerns we have are with students leaving lunchrooms to go to another lunchroom, which is a safety concern and demonstrates a lack of respect to lunch monitors, as they are not following our lunchroom expectations. In addition, students are not listening to lunch monitors and get involved in conflicts with other students. Your support is very much appreciated in helping support the school to reduce these behaviors and have our lunch hour be a more pleasant experience for everyone. This sets the stage for a more peaceful and cooperative afternoon.

## WINTER CONCERTS

Since our winter break is now over, I thought it would be a wonderful time to reminisce about our lovely winter concerts. Our Music teacher, Mrs. Tyndall, along with her husband who was operating our sound board and lights for the concerts, did an incredible job of preparing our students for the performances – they were beautiful, and we hope that you all enjoyed the concerts!

During these concerts we sold tickets for a 50/50 draw. We are happy to announce that Mr. Darrow was the winner of this draw, and he took home \$189.00. Thank you to all of you who purchased tickets. This is very much appreciated.

## HOLIDAY MARKET

We had an incredibly successful holiday market for our students. We hope that you, or other family members, enjoyed the gifts your children selected from our market! Many, many thanks to all of you who donated items for our market! We certainly had a wide variety of items and there were so many that children were able to select 3 gifts from the items. We had many volunteers, and our Grade 5 leaders of course, who helped students select gifts, go to the wrapping table to select a bag, and have their gift labelled before taking them home that day. We look forward to doing this again next year!

## FEBRAURY IS REGISTRATION MONTH

The month of February is an opportunity for parents/guardians to register their school aged child for the 2024 – 2025 school year. The registration process is now online, so parents/guardians can go to the HRCE website to see the link for registration and the information that will be needed to register your child for school. The link for the HRCE website is: <https://www.hrce.ca/>.

## SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL

Our next SAC Meeting is Monday, **January 15<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m.** in our school library. If you are interested in this council, please reach out by emailing me at [jgraham@hrce.ca](mailto:jgraham@hrce.ca) if you wish to attend a future meeting. Your voice in consulting the principal on school and curriculum matters is welcome!



### IMPORTANT DATES:

#### JANUARY

Tuesday, January 2<sup>nd</sup>      Classes Resume

#### MARCH

March 11<sup>th</sup> – 15<sup>th</sup>      March Break (No Classes)  
 Monday, March 18<sup>th</sup>      Assessment and Evaluation Day  
 (No Classes)

Friday, March 29<sup>th</sup>      Good Friday (No Classes)

#### MAY

Monday, May 20<sup>th</sup>      Victoria Day (No Classes)

#### FEBRUARY

1<sup>st</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February is REGISTRATION MONTH  
 Monday, February 19<sup>th</sup>      Heritage Day (No Classes)

#### APRIL

Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup>      Easter Monday (No Classes)  
 Thursday, April 4<sup>th</sup>      A.M. Staff Professional Learning  
 (No Classes)  
 1:00 – 6:00 p.m. Parent-Teacher  
 Conferences

#### JUNE

Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup>      Assessment and Evaluation Day  
 (No Classes)  
 Friday, June 28<sup>th</sup>      Last Day of School



### Home and School News:

Our Home and School Association would like to extend a HUGE THANK YOU to all in our school community for supporting our Randy's Pizza Kit fundraiser. This fundraiser was a wonderful success for our school and raised a little over \$1,700.00 dollars for our Home and School. Your support of this fundraiser made this the considerable success that it was, and we are so appreciative. Our Home and School will be meeting in January to make decisions on what this money will be used for, as well as upcoming activities we will have for our school and school community as we continue through this year.

If you would like to become involved in our Home and School, please email the Principal, Janice Graham at [jgraham@hrce.ca](mailto:jgraham@hrce.ca) and she will add you to our membership list. Our next Home and School meeting is **Monday, January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, at 4:30 p.m.** in our school library.

### PARENT/GUARDIAN CORNER:

**Information in this section is for parent/guardians. This information will contain important school related procedures/policies, as well as any information we receive from community groups and our Schools Plus personnel. Please refer to this section in each newsletter for most recent information.**

### TUTORING OPPORTUNITY:

The **Sackville Public Library** is offering a **FREE** tutoring program for children. The program is called Children's Reading Support however, the tutoring support also offers early math and language support. For more information, please contact Eric Drew at [drewe@halifax](mailto:drewe@halifax), or drop into the library at 636 Sackville Drive, or call 902-865-8653.

A promotional graphic for a tutoring program. It features a photograph of a young child with glasses reading a book. The child is wearing a blue and yellow plaid shirt. Overlaid on the image are several white line-art icons: a key, an open book, a laptop, a lightbulb, a rocket, and a paint palette. The word 'Tutoring' is written in large, bold, white letters across the middle of the image. Below it, a pink box contains the text 'A little help for big dreams' and 'Children's Reading Support is a free tutoring program for children in our community at Sackville Public Library. For more information, drop by 636 Sackville Dr. or call 902-865-8653.' The Sackville Public Library logo is at the bottom.

*SchoolsPlus staff are here to support Sycamore Lane families.*

## **Did you know SchoolsPlus can:** **Help you navigate support for heating costs?**

Heating costs continue to be higher than past winters for many homes. If you are struggling with heating costs reach out to SchoolsPlus and we can help you navigate supports available.

**REMEMBER: SchoolsPlus services are confidential.**

**Just give us a call!**

**Your Sycamore Lane SchoolsPlus Team is:**

- Nicole MacFarlane (Interim Facilitator)
- Michelle Boudreau (Community Outreach Worker)
- Angela Trenaman (Child and Youth Care Practitioner)

Contact us at 902-399-8320 (call or text) or [michelle.boudreau@hrce.ca](mailto:michelle.boudreau@hrce.ca)



### SCHOOL BELLS:

<b>7:55 – 8:15 a.m.</b>	Students enter school to go to classrooms
<b>8:15 a.m.</b>	Instructional Day begins
<b>9:45 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.</b>	Outside Recess for Grades 3 – 5 students (Snack time inside from 10:00 – 10:15 a.m.)
<b>10:00 – 10:15 a.m.</b>	Outside Recess for Primary – Grade 2 students (Snack time inside from 9:45 – 10:00 a.m.)
<b>11:45 a.m. – 12:45 p.m.</b>	Lunch Hour
<b>11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</b>	Primary – Grade 2 inside eating; outside play from <b>12:15 – 12:45 p.m.</b>
<b>11:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.</b>	Grades 3 – 5 outside play; inside eating from <b>12:15 – 12:45 p.m.</b>
<b>2:15 p.m.</b>	Dismissal

**Please note if you are dropping your child(ren) off at school in the morning:**

- **It is important they arrive on time (by 8:15 a.m.).**
- **Students who are late for class disrupt the flow of the learning environment.**
- **Students miss valuable instructional time and important routines to begin their day.**
- **If possible, please schedule appointments for your child(ren) after their 2:15 p.m. dismissal time.**

**PARENT/GUARDIAN REFERENCE PAGES:**

*The below noted items will remain in each month's newsletters, as they are school procedures and information that you can refer to at any time. Please review the below noted information items.*

**PEANUT AND NUT AWARENESS:**

Due to food allergies and sensitivities at school, please do not send food to school that contains peanuts and/or tree nuts, including Nutella, which is made with hazelnuts. Students who bring sandwiches with WOW butter or other type of non-nut spread please indicate, with a note in your child's lunch bag, what the spread is and that it does not contain nuts. Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

**SCHOOL WEBSITE:**

You can find lots of information on the school website: [sle.hrce.ca](http://sle.hrce.ca). Staff contact information is on the Staff Directory page. More information is located on the "Our School" page. Copies of our monthly school newsletter, as well as school events calendars, will be posted on the website.

**SCHOOL LIBRARY BOOKS:**

If you have found classroom or library books over the summer, please send them in with your child to give to their teacher. Thank you!

**SCHOOL PARKING LOT:**

We ask that parents/guardians do not park in our school parking lot. The driveway loop at the front of the school is for buses. If you are an EXCEL parent/guardian and are dropping off your child(ren) in the morning, or picking them up after school, please park on the street to bring/pick up your child from EXCEL. Please make sure when parking on the street, that you do not block the entry or exit driveways for the bus loop. If you are parked in the driveway areas, you may run the risk of your car being damaged as large busses have to exit and maneuver the corners to get on the road. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

**ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY:**

Please do not bring pets on school property. Children and adults can be nervous around animals. We want to keep everyone safe, including your pet. Thank you for complying.

**LUNCH MONITORS:**

We are looking for substitute lunch monitors. If you are interested in working one hour per day, one to five days per week, please call the office for details. New employees need to have their Criminal Record & Vulnerable Sector Check as well as a Child Abuse Register check and complete an application for lunch monitor. Please call **Mrs. Moore at 902-864-6730** for more information.

**ADMINISTERING MEDICATION AT SCHOOL:**

To have medication administered to students while in school, parents/guardians need to drop off the medication and fill out the required forms. Medication needs to be in the original bottle with the prescription label. School staff can only administer prescribed medications. Please advise the school in advance of administering medication so that the appropriate forms can be sent home.

**BREAKFAST PROGRAM:**

Students are welcome to have a grab and go breakfast item in the morning. Granola bars, cereal bars, etc. will be available in their classroom.

**SAFE ARRIVAL:**

You can report future absences using the School Messenger app, website, or toll-free phone number. If your child is absent and the absence has not been reported in advance, you will receive notifications via email, text, and phone calls from School Messenger. To report your student absent, you can use any of the following methods: PowerSchool Parent/Student Portal Parents/guardians can log in to <https://sishrsb.ednet.ns.ca/public/> to access the School Messenger website to report future absences. School Messenger App Parents/guardians can download the School Messenger app for Android and iOS devices and use their username and password for the PowerSchool Portal. Toll-Free Number Parents/guardians can call **1-833-582-6940** to report future absences using an automated system. Please see the link: <https://www.hrce.ca/SafeArrival> for more information.

**BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR LUNCH PROGRAM:**

All students are eligible to remain at school over the lunch hour. They need to bring their lunch each day. Please do not send items that need to be microwaved. We do not do this at school as items may be overheated, or risk burning someone. Our lunch program is run by lunch “monitors,” who are responsible for keeping your children safe over the lunch hour. Please remind your children to be respectful of the lunch monitors. Children need to build independence as well. Please ensure containers are not too difficult to open. We will encourage children to pick up their garbage and place in appropriate recyclable containers or garbage. If behaviors become too challenging over the lunch hour, school administration will call you to discuss.

**BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR BUS STUDENTS:**

The bus drivers and company have expectations for behavior. Children are expected to remain seated, use a reasonable voice level and refrain from use of inappropriate language. The drivers and school staff remind students daily of these expectations. If your child’s behavior is unacceptable, I will receive a misconduct report.

- 1<sup>st</sup> occurrence, I will speak directly with your child and remind them of the expectations.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> occurrence, I will either call you or email you to inform you.
- 3<sup>rd</sup> occurrence, your child will be suspended from travelling the bus for a day,

Please speak with your child at home about their bus behavior. It is important for everyone’s safety.

**SCHOOL PARKING LOT & DROP OFF OR PICK UP OF STUDENTS:**

Parents/Guardians, we are requesting that you do not use the Bus Lane area of our school when picking up or dropping off your children. This is used for busses as well as emergency vehicles. When dropping off your children, please park along the road and walk your child to the main doors of the school. This will help ease any congestion in the front of the school.

**ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME:**

We are having challenges with students bringing in some items from home. We request these items **REMAIN** home as they are causing arguments and distractions in classrooms, as well as outside on the playground.

So, students are not to bring the following items to school:

- Pokemon Cards
- Handheld game devices
- Fidget/spinner toys
- Stuffedies
- Other special items from home

The above noted items are **NOT** to be brought to school. Please know there may be special occasions at school where children are able to bring in stuffies, etc. from home, but these will be communicated by the teacher.

The school does not assume responsibility for any items brought from home that go lost, missing/stolen, or broken. The list noted above is not exhaustive. There may be other special items/collectable items that children want to bring to school, however these distract from learning and have caused problems between children. If these items are found at school, they will be taken and held for the day. Their child's teacher will then contact you to let you know there was a problem and request that these items remain home.



### CELL PHONES:

Children do not need to have cell phones during school hours. We have all your contact numbers and will certainly reach out to you should we need to reach you. As well, you can always call the school and leave a message if there is a need to communicate information related to your child. Please remember, should your contact information change, please advise Mrs. Moore, our Administrative Assistant, so she can update our records.

If you have a cell phone for your child that you want them to carry with them to and from school for safety purposes, we will ask them to keep this in their backpack as it is **not permitted out in classrooms, hallways, washrooms, or taken outside during lunch hour. If a child is found with their phone out and using it during school hours, the phone will be taken and kept at the principal's office for the remainder of the day. The phone will be returned to the child at the end of the school day.**

As always, thank you in advance for your cooperation and attention to these requests.

Yours in Education,

*J. Graham*

Ms. J. Graham,  
Principal