



École Burton Ettinger Elementary

DECEMBER 2025 School Newsletter

ÉBES Mission Statement

At École Burton Ettinger Elementary, we empower every student in a safe, equitable, inclusive, and nurturing environment. Guided by empathy and respect, we foster a love of learning and support the growth of compassionate, creative, and responsible global citizens.

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Dear ÉBES Families,

As we enter the month of December, I want to extend my appreciation for the continued support you provide to our school community. This time of year brings both excitement and reflection, and I am grateful for the partnership we share in supporting every child's learning and well-being.

Throughout the fall, students have shown growth—academically, socially, and emotionally. Classrooms are filled with curiosity, perseverance, and kindness, and our staff continue to work hard to create inclusive and engaging learning environments for all. December is always a busy and joyful month. You will receive updates from your child's teachers about upcoming classroom activities, learning celebrations, and school-wide events. We encourage families to stay connected through our regular messages and to reach out to your child's teacher if you have any questions.

Our upcoming Winter Concert will be held at **1:15 p.m. (doors open at 1:00)** and **6:30 p.m. (doors open at 6:00)** on **Thursday, December 11th** for all Primary – Grade 2/3 classes:

**P MacDonald, P Daniels, P Hennigar, P Waller, P/1 Plank, 1 Reardon,
1 Karis-Allen/DePalma, 1 Boudreau, 1/2 Casey, 2 Dodds, 2 Chiasson, 2 Wilson-Gray, 2/3 Kelly**

As the holiday season approaches, I want to acknowledge that our families may celebrate in many different ways—or may simply enjoy the quiet pause that winter break brings. However, your family marks this time of year, we wish you moments of rest, connection, and joy.

The last day of classes for students before winter break will be **Friday, December 19th, 2025**. School reopens **Monday, January 5, 2026**. We look forward to welcoming everyone back ready for a new year of learning.

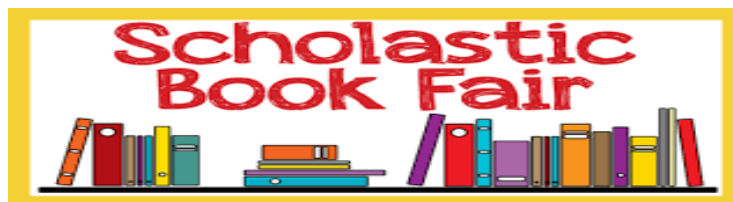
Thank you again for your continued partnership. Our school is the wonderful place it is because of our students, families, and staff working together.

Warmest wishes for a peaceful and joyful December.

Ms. J. Graham
Principal/Directrice

IMPORTANT DATES TO REMEMBER FOR DECEMBER 2025:**Important Dates for Burton Ettinger:**

- Friday, November 28th, 2025 Student Adaptations Sent Home
- Monday, December 1st, 2025 1st Term Report Cards Sent Home
Will be sent electronically by the end of the day
- Wednesday, December 3rd, 2025 Parent-Teacher Conferences in Evening
- Thursday, December 4th, 2025 Parent-Teacher Conferences in the Morning
Teacher Professional Practice in Afternoon
NO CLASSES FOR STUDENTS
- Thursday, December 11th, 2025 Winter Concert
Grades Primary – Grade 2/3 Classes performing
***1:15 p.m.** (doors open at **1:00 p.m.**)
***6:30 p.m.** (doors open at **6:00 p.m.**)
- Friday, December 19th, 2025 Last Day of Classes for Students before Break
- Monday, January 5th, 2026 First Day back to Classes after Break

ÉBES School Book Fair

It is that time again! So exciting – our Scholastic Book Fair will be happening very soon! Please keep your calendars open and join us at the school to purchase some books from our Book Fair. This year, we will also have French books available for purchase!

Tuesday, December 2 nd , 2025	First Look at items for students <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Classes will have opportunities to purchase/and or create a wish list
Wednesday, December 3 rd , 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will shop during their library classes • Book Fair Open during Parent-Teacher Conferences – please visit!
Thursday, December 4 th , 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Book Fair Open during Morning Parent-Teacher Conferences – please visit!
Friday, December 5 th , 2025	Morning Visits from Students for purchasing – last chance to shop!

FOLLOWING THE PROVINCIAL SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT AT ÉBES:

We have now implemented our School Mission Statement and Classroom Matrix for Expected Behaviours in classrooms. Teachers will be reviewing these expectations with students daily.

Our School Mission Statement is at the top of each month's Newsletter.

- Our School Matrix of Expected Behaviors is included below.
- Please feel free to copy this and put in a prominent place in your home.
- Your home support in reinforcing these expected behaviors for your children at school is so important.
- We ask you to review the Matrix with your children from time to time as well.
- This will help build consistency of expectations for our students.
- Each day on our announcements, we review a certain behavior to remind students of the expectations.
- The Matrix is posted in all classrooms and reviewed periodically with students.

Thank you in advance for your support and partnership.

ÉBES SCHOOL MATRIX OF EXPECTED BEHAVIORS:**École Burton Ettinger Elementary****School-Wide Matrix of Expectations**

	Respectful	Responsible	Safe
	We honor and respect others, ourselves, and the spaces we share. We listen to adults and follow expectations to create a positive environment for everyone.	We do what's right, even when no one is watching. We build trust in our school by being honest and taking ownership of our words and actions.	We stay safe by following expectations, so everyone feels comfortable and cared for at school. We do our best to contribute positively to our school community.
Learning Environments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiet voices, listening ears • Use polite language and manners • Stay in your learning space • Allow others to learn 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do your best learning and remember to keep trying! • Take care of learning materials • Participate in your learning • Clean up after yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move carefully, watch for others in the room • Put learning items away • Use materials appropriately • Use an appropriate voice level
Transitions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use a quiet voice and walk calmly to avoid disturbing others • Keep to the right and walk in a single line • Respect personal space—no pushing, shoving, or crowding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of your surroundings • Keep hook space in the hallway clean • Ask before going into the hallway and go directly to your destination 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Always walk facing forward—no skipping steps • Use friendly feet—no running or jumping • Always keep your hands to yourself • Keep the hallways clear so everyone can move safely
Shared Spaces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep clean • Wait your turn • Give others personal space • Respect the privacy of others 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use for its intended purpose and return to class • Use only the supplies you need • Report problems to an adult • Tidy up the area - leave it cleaner than you found it 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give others privacy • Tell an adult if something is broken or unsafe • Wash your hands with soap and water
Lunch & Snack 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask an adult to leave the room • Clean up your eating space when finished eating • Use kind words and table manners • Listen to lunchtime helpers and adults • Keep your hands, feet, and food to yourself 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean up after yourself • Stay seated while eating • Only eat the food that was made for you • Use appropriate bins for organics, garbage, recyclables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Listen to lunch monitors instructions • Use respectful voice volume • Keep food and drinks in your space • Let an adult know if there's a spill or problem
Playground/Outside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Put equipment back where it belongs • Play stops at the bell; quickly line up when the bell rings • Listen when someone says "no" • Use kind words and actions • Follow game rules and play fairly: take turns • Listen to adults and peers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use equipment properly • Clean up and return equipment after use • Solve small problems with words or ask for help • Stay in your assigned area 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If someone is hurt find an adult • Keep hands, feet, and body to yourself • Be aware of your surroundings • Use equipment the way it was meant to be used

ÉBES AFTER SCHOOL SKATING:

Please note: Our after-school skate for **Wednesday, December 3rd** will be **CANCELLED**. The rink is booked off for another activity, so our skating time has been cancelled. We will resume our skate from **3 – 4 p.m. on Wednesday, December 10th**.

Centennial Arena (27 Vimy Avenue, Halifax) from 3:00 - 4:00 PM.

- The last skate before the Winter Break will be **Wednesday December 17th**.
- The cost is **\$5.00 per family** or **\$2.00 per person**.
- Helmets are required for students and novice skaters, and adult supervision is mandatory.
- Unfortunately, equipment rentals are not available, but families may want to post **skates** or helmets to give away or sell on the school Facebook page.

Many thanks to Centennial Arena for partnering with our school to make this event happen!

**SCHOOL ADVISORY COUNCIL**

Our School Advisory Council met again in November. The meeting minutes from all our meetings are available for review on our school webpage.

If you are interested in attending our SAC meetings, we welcome everyone and are looking for representation from all families in our school community. This council meets 6 times per year, and members advise the principal on important school and curriculum matters. This team consists of staff, parents/guardians, and community members.

If you are interested in learning more about this team, please email me at jgraham@hrce.ca. Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, January 21st, 2026**, beginning at **5:30 p.m.**

**PARENT/TEACHER ASSOCIATION:**

We are looking for members for our PTA (Parent-Teacher Association) Team. Members plan fun events, fundraising opportunities, and social events for our school community throughout the year. Please email our Principal, Janice Graham at jgraham@hrce.ca, if you would like to participate. Our next meeting is **Wednesday, January 21st, 2026**, at **6:30 p.m.** We welcome all members. Please attend if you are able, we would love to have your input!

HRCE Acknowledgement of Important December Dates:

December 3:	International Day of Persons with Disabilities
December 4:	Progress Conferences/Teacher Professional Practice (no classes)
December 10:	International Human Rights Day
December 14:	First day of Hanukkah
December 19:	Last day of school for students before holiday break
December 22:	Teacher Professional Practice Day (no classes - PP-12)
December 25:	Christmas Day
December 26:	Kwanzaa

SCHOOLSPLUS IS HERE TO SUPPORT YOU:



SchoolsPlus is a confidential, free service available in every school in Nova Scotia. Our goal is to build positive relationships between families, schools, and communities.

Parents, guardians and students (12+) can self-refer to SchoolsPlus 12 months a year! Just contact the SchoolsPlus Facilitator at your school.

Call 902-464-2000, ext. 2331 or email schoolsplus@hrce.ca. Learn more about SchoolsPlus [here](#).

NEW EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY RESOURCE FOR FAMILIES:



We're excited to share a new online resource designed to help families understand how technology supports student learning in HRCE. This page provides an overview of how tools like Chromebooks and Google for Education are used in classrooms, what provincially approved online platforms students may access, and how student privacy is protected. You'll also find information about Nova Scotia's guidance on the provincial cell phone expectations, tips for supporting online safety and digital citizenship at home, and an introduction to how students are learning about artificial intelligence in a thoughtful and responsible way. It also includes answers to common questions about screen time, passwords, communication during the school day, and more. You can find the webpage [here](#).

STUDENT ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT POLICY:

Learning more about the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy

- Did you know? [The Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#) guides our approach to attendance and is in place to support all students.
- The policy states that regular, punctual attendance supports academic success, responsibility, and preparation for the future.
- Ensuring regular attendance is a joint effort between students, families, and schools. As a parent/guardian, you play an important role by monitoring attendance, communicating with the school when your child is absent, and supporting your child's regular attendance.

What Should You Know?

- **Communication about absences**
 - Schools will monitor attendance and lateness.
 - All absences must be communicated to the school, following the school's procedure.
 - If absenteeism or lateness reaches 10% of class time, the school will begin to engage more actively with the student and family.
 - If it goes beyond 15%, more targeted supports may be used (counselling, referrals, community supports).
- **High school credit requirement**
 - For Grades 10–12, students must attend at least 80% of class time to earn the credit.
 - If more than 20% of class time is missed, and efforts to improve attendance have not succeeded, the teacher may recommend "loss of credit." The principal makes the final decision.

What Can You Do?

- Monitor and encourage punctual, consistent attendance
- Maintain open communication with the school when absences or challenges arise
- Work with school staff to understand supports or accommodations for your child
- Be aware of the thresholds (10%, 15%) and possible consequences (intervention, loss of credit in high school)
- Remember: the policy allows flexibility. If your child has a legitimate reason for missing school (health, family issue, etc.), schools are encouraged to take a supportive approach.

PL RESOURCES FOR PARENTS FROM UNPLUGGED CANADA:

If you're concerned about your kids' screen time, smartphone use, or social media pressure, there are some wonderful resources below to help parents and caregivers navigate the challenges of raising kids in a digital world.

For parents: *The Anxious Generation* by Jonathan Haidt highlights the research and evidence behind how early smartphone and social media exposure have shaped a generation over the last 10–15 years. *Ten Rules for Raising Kids in a High-Tech World* by Jean Twenge offers practical, actionable guidance to help parents set healthy boundaries and support their kids' digital wellbeing.

For kids: *The Amazing Generation*, written for pre-teens and teens and co-authored by Jonathan Haidt, will be released on December 30. It explains the impact of today's digital environment in an engaging, age-appropriate way.

All of these books are available at your local library or bookstore.

Unplugged Canada is a parent-led, national movement advocating for healthier childhoods by delaying smartphones and social media until kids are more developmentally ready. Join thousands of Canadian families choosing to delay by taking the Unplugged Canada Pledge at unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge.

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 are not sure if you have opted-in, text Y to the following number: **978338**
- [On the HRCE website](#)
- [On Instagram](#)

It is 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.

WE'RE ALWAYS HIRING!



Did you know that HRCE has more than 10,000 employees serving more than 60,000 students? Our job postings are updated every Wednesday at noon and feature a wide variety of career opportunities! As HRCE grows, so does our staff. Check out new opportunities weekly at www.myhrce.ca/jobs.



SCHOOL POLICIES (WILL REMAIN IN NEWSLETTER FOR YOUR REFERENCE):

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.

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 hazel nuts. Students who bring sandwiches with WOW butter or other types 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 PARKING:

As you may be aware, we do not have a school parking lot here at ÉBES. This means traffic is very congested in the mornings and at end of day pick up. For the safety and security of all in our school, we are asking parents to park on blocks away from the school and walk over to drop off or pick up your child. Traffic congestion on Sunnybrae, Central or Alex Streets, which surround our school is very dangerous for all in our school community, so we would aim to limit traffic on these streets for the periods of drop off (approximately 8:30 a.m. – 8:45 a.m.) and pick up (approximately 2:45 p.m. – 3:10 p.m.). Our school buses pick up children on the Central Side and Alex Street sides of the building. Please avoid driving on Alex Street during drop-off and pick up times, while buses are present.

VOLUNTEERS IN SCHOOL:

If you are planning to volunteer at school (i.e. class trips, etc.), you will need to have a Criminal Record Check/Vulnerable Sector Check completed, which can be obtained through the HRPD/RCMP Detachment, and a Child Abuse Registry Check, which can be obtained by Child Protection Services.

Steps to complete the process:

- First, you will have to get a letter from the school indicating your intent of applying to the HRPD/RCMP for a CRC/Vulnerable Sector Check. We can provide you with the forms from the office.
- Once you get this letter, complete your Criminal Record Check/Vulnerable Sector Check form and bring this to the HRPD/RCMP for processing.
- You will have to wait for the results.
- The Child Abuse Registry form needs to be completed directly by you and then mailed in to the agency (address is on the form).
- If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Mrs. Bodnarchuk at the office, 902-457-8922.



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 pharmacy 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:

We have a wonderful breakfast program here at Burton Ettinger run by an equally wonderful group of volunteers! We appreciate their efforts every day and welcome your children to come to the breakfast program during each school day between 8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m. Breakfast items include cereal, bagels, fruit, juice, etc. This is a great opportunity for your child/children to socialize with friends and staff while enjoying a nutritious breakfast and a great start to their school morning! If you are interested in volunteering for this program, please contact the school.

BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS FOR LUNCH PROGRAM:

All students are eligible to remain at school over the lunch hour. They need to bring or order 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 it 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 bus 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, school administration will receive a misconduct report.

- **1st OCCURENCE:**
Administration will speak directly with your child to remind them of appropriate expectations.
- **2nd OCCURENCE:**
Administration will either call you or email you to inform you about the occurrence.
- **3rd OCCURENCE:**
Your child will be suspended from travelling on the bus for a day.

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

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!

ANIMALS ON SCHOOL PROPERTY:

Please do not bring pets on school property. Children and adults can be nervous about 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. Bodnarchuk at 902-457-8922 for more information.

ITEMS TO LEAVE AT HOME:

Items brought in from home can be a source of distraction in school. We request these items **REMAIN** home as they can lead to distraction or loss of items in school.

These items include, but are not limited to:

- 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 stuffedies, 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 at home.

**CELL PHONES:**

In reference to the Provincial Policy on Cell Phones in schools, for elementary aged children, cell phones are not to be out or on at any time during the school instructional day (from school arrival to end of day dismissal, including recess and lunch). This means that a child's phone should not be turned on and accessible during their school day.

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. Also, 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. Bodnarchuk, our Administrative Assistant, so she can update your information.

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 and do not take it out at any point in the day, as it is not permitted out in classrooms.

The school will not assume responsibility or liability for your child's cell phone should it get damaged or lost.

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

Yours in Education,

J. Graham

Ms. J. Graham,
Principal/Directrice