

DARTMOUTH SOUTH ACADEMY



Newsletter #6-February 2021

Dartmouth South Academy

111 Prince Arthur Avenue

Dartmouth, NS B2Y 0C5

<http://dsa.hrce.ca>

Phone: (902) 464-2081/Fax: (902) 461-0199

Principal: Adrienne Blumenthal

Vice Principal: Susan Aucoin

School Closure for Inclement Weather – guidelines attached

The Halifax Regional Centre for Education takes great care when making the decision to alter the normal operations of schools in the event of severe or inclement weather. Decisions on school closures and/or bus cancellations are posted on the board's website at www.hrce.ns.ca, on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HRCE_Official](https://twitter.com/HRCE_Official), recorded on 464-INFO (4636) and communicated to all local radio stations. You can also receive notice of school bus cancellations by e-mail or text message by following the link on the front page (left side) of the HRCE website. If you are interested in learning more on how decisions regarding closures and cancellations are made, visit

<http://www.hrce.ns.ca/content/id/1137.html>

Lunch Monitors

We are reaching out in search of lunch monitors. If you have or are willing to have a criminal record check/vulnerable sector and child abuse registry done and are able to help, please phone 902-464-2081 and we can begin the process. Thank you.

It's African Heritage Month

The 2021 theme is

Black History Matters:

Listen, Learn, Share and Act – Stay tuned for updates as to how our classes are celebrating this important legacy.

Bell Times

Morning Classes Begin at 9:00 am

Dismissal for P-8 – 3:00 pm

Pre-Primary and

Primary Registration for 2021-2022

February is registration month for the 2021-2022 school year! We are doing contactless registration this year as non-essential visitors are not allowed in the building and for the shared health of our community. If you have a child who will be 4 as of December 31, 2021, they are eligible for Pre-primary. If you have a child who will be 5 as of December 31, 2021, they are eligible for Primary. The registration form has been sent out to all families through email. If you require a copy, please contact the main office. Steps for registration:

1. **Complete all sections of the registration form.**
2. **Attached the following: birth certificate, passport, immigration or adoption papers (for primary and pre-primary only) proof of address, proof of medical insurance.**
3. **Email all completed documents to dsa@hrce.ca and someone from the school will be in contact with you once the registration information is processed.**

Parents who wish to enroll their primary child into the French Immersion Program are to register him/her at Shannon Park School.

Dates to Remember



Feb 1 – 26 – Registration month for Pre-Primary/Primary 2021-2022 Students

Feb 1 - 5 – Canadian School Counselors Week

Feb 8 – 12 – Lockdown Drill

Feb 10 – PTO Meeting via Zoom – 6:30 pm

Feb 15 – Edward Francis Arab Day (no classes)

Feb 16 – SAC Meeting – 6 pm

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School Safety and Security

As you are likely aware, our school practices lockdowns as part of our emergency planning/preparedness cycle. Staff and students are familiar with lockdowns, but we wish to increase your knowledge of our procedures.

It is important to understand that school staff will implement a lockdown and call police if and when there is any reason to believe that imminent danger to students and staff may exist. At this stage, everyone in the school will move to a secure location, safe from harm. Police will respond to the school and no one will enter or leave, until the situation is resolved.

The first instinct of parents/guardians is to either phone the school directly or your child, or to attend directly to the school. You are asked not to do any of these, but instead to understand and follow the procedures outlined in this letter.

Experience has shown that roadways need to be kept clear for responding emergency vehicles, and parents and others attempting to drive to the school can slow police and other emergency responders from getting to and securing the area as quickly as possible. Therefore, if you hear that a lockdown is occurring at your child's school, do not attend to the school. Instead, you may attend to your schools' designated Parent location to receive information which will be provided by police and school representatives.

School Safety and Security...CONT'D

Please be assured that every effort will be made to keep you informed as to what is happening during the event. Experience has shown that incorrect information often circulates during an event when it does not come directly from the police or school board. After the lockdown, you may be asked to go to the school or to wait where you are until your child is brought to your location.

We also ask that you not attempt to phone your child. In a lockdown, everyone must remain quiet, and a ringing cell phone may draw undue attention to the secure location where your child and his/her classmates are.

Aside from lockdown procedures, your child's school may also implement a precautionary "Hold and Secure" if there is an unrelated emergency situation occurring outside the building or in the neighborhood that could potentially present a danger to the school. In this situation all doors to the school are locked and monitored to allow any students from outside entry into the school. Classes will generally continue but no one will be allowed to enter or leave the building until the situation is resolved. We also ask that you do **NOT** attend to the school unless asked to do so by school board staff.

We encourage you to discuss school safety with your child and to address any concerns they may have and we welcome any questions you may have about this or any other issue related to the safety and security of our school.

SCHOOL	PRIMARY PARENT STAGING AREA	SECONDARY PARENT STAGING AREA
Dartmouth South Academy	North Woodside Community Centre 230 Pleasant Street 902-463-9276	Grace Baptist Church 51 Athorpe Drive 902-434-3047

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EXCEL 2021-2022



EXCEL is a High Five® registered before and after school recreational program offered by the Halifax Regional Centre for Education at 66 elementary schools across the Halifax Regional Municipality. EXCEL's dedicated and qualified program leaders plan and facilitate weekly games and activities that consider the needs and interests of the registered students. These program plans reflect EXCEL's overall philosophy which is focused on providing opportunities for physical activity and positive social interaction in a safe and fun environment.

While program size and operating space may differ at each school, EXCEL's programming objectives are consistent. Since the program began over 25 years ago, it has developed significantly based on experience, advancements in the field of youth recreation, and feedback from participants, parents and staff. Today, EXCEL is one of the largest before and after school programs in Canada, providing engaging and inclusive recreational opportunities for nearly 4000 program participants.

Program Highlights:

- Structured and unstructured active play both inside and outside;
- A minimum of 45 minutes per day of structured physical activity;
- Opportunities for participant choice in programming;
- Special guests such as Mad Science, Ray's Reptiles, Atlantic Youth, TK Adventure Play, and Shubenacadie Wildlife Park;
- Loose Parts and Loose Arts Play - open-ended activities using a variety of natural and human-made materials to build, create and imagine;
- P.A.L.S. (Playground Activity Leaders in Schools) for participants in Grades 4-6; and
- HRQ Gym (Homework/Reading/Quiet Time/Gym) from 5:30 to 6:00 pm.



Professional development days are used to provide valuable training for EXCEL staff, including First Aid and CPR C, High Five® Principles of Healthy Child Development, Fundamental Movement Skills, Verbal De-escalation, Child Guidance, and Respectful Workplaces, to name a few.

EXCEL does not offer programming on days when the schools are closed due to inclement weather or other extenuating circumstances. Access to the buildings is not available on these occasions and the safety of our participants and staff are of primary importance.

2021-22 EXCEL Registration Dates:

Registration for the 2021-22 EXCEL Program will start in late April for Returning Parents/Guardians and in early May for New Parents/Guardians. *Please note: Siblings of current EXCEL participants who will be starting school in September 2021 are eligible to enroll during the Early Registration Period.*

Registration will be completed online (using a device larger than a cell phone) by accessing the EZChildTrack Parent Portal. If you have an existing account with EXCEL, access the Parent Portal by entering your email and password in the Returning Parents Sign In section. If you are new to the EXCEL Program, enter the Parent Portal using the "New Parents Open Account" section.

Once finalized, specific details on the registration process and fees for 2021-22 will be posted on the HRCE website at https://www.hrce.ca/excel_registration.

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EXCEL is Hiring!

Employment Opportunity – The EXCEL program is searching for fun, energetic, and reliable individuals to work full-time hours or as substitutes in EXCEL programs across HRCE. This is a great way to get involved in your child's school!

Full-time staff receive competitive wages along with benefits including:

- paid sick/personal leave;
- paid bereavement leave;
- Employee & Family Assistance Program;
- paid Snow Days;
- free EXCEL for their children;
- paid training; and
- discounted GoodLife memberships.

Should you or anyone you know be interested in working with EXCEL, please contact one of the three administrators below for more information.

Halifax area schools – Amy Leeper, EXCEL Administrator 902-464-2000 ext. 2013 – amy.leeper@hrce.ca

Dartmouth area schools – Lori Fougere, EXCEL Administrator 902-464-2000 ext. 2492 – lfougere@hrce.ca

Sackville/Bedford area schools – Tracey Penney, EXCEL Administrator 902-464-2000 ext. 5596 – tracey.penney@hrce.ca

*It's a great way to get involved
in your child's school!*



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Guidelines for school and/or bus cancellations due to inclement weather

Nova Scotia winter weather can change quickly and can be challenging to predict. This document outlines the steps we take when deciding whether to cancel school and/or bussing.

A 6:00 am announcement could be:

All schools are closed for the day

OR

Some schools (either individually or by family) are closed for the day

OR

All schools are open, but some or all busses are not operating for the day

OR

All schools are delayed in opening by 2 hours

If weather deteriorates, or is forecast to worsen throughout the morning

An 11:00 am announcement could be:

Bussed students will be picked up 2 hours earlier than their regular dismissal time

AND

Walking students will be dismissed at their regularly scheduled lunch hour

Remember:

Parents/guardians always have the right to keep their child home from school if they believe that the travelling conditions are unsuitable.

How does Halifax Regional Centre for Education (HRCE) decide on school and/or bus cancellations?

By 4:30 am, HRCE staff begin to gather information from:

- A contracted weather service that provides radar and satellite imagery, real-time road conditions and weather warnings;
- A meteorologist to discuss details of forecast, level and type of precipitation and impact on road conditions;
- Stock Transportation consults bus drivers throughout HRM about road conditions in their area;
- Municipal and provincial transportation staff; and
- Other local weather services, including Environment Canada and the Weather Network.

By 5:30 am, staff make recommendations to the Regional Executive Director (or designate), who makes the final decision and communicates it by 6:00 am.

Where can cancellation information be found?

Website: www.hrce.ca Twitter: @HRCE_NS Phone: 902-464-INFO (4636) Local media outlets

Subscribe to email/text notifications at www.hrce.ca



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