

Regional Executive Director's Report to School Communities in the Strait Region

February 2023

In this month's report, I am very pleased to share with you a number of activities and initiatives that are making a positive difference in the lives of our students and families. This month, our schools celebrated the African Heritage Month theme, *Seas of Struggle: African Peoples from Shore to Shore*, which recognizes the resiliency, strength and determination of people of African descent from the shores of Africa to the shores of Nova Scotia.

Each February, in particular, and continued throughout the year, teachers incorporate a variety of educational lessons in their classroom instruction that focus on the history, culture and achievements of people of African descent to highlight the connection of our past to today and how this information shapes our understanding and cultural awareness. This month is also a time for each of us to reflect on our shared history and understanding of the contributions and traditions of people of African descent and a wonderful opportunity to join in the celebration and promotion of the culture, legacy and achievements of people of African descent in Nova Scotia – past and present. Please see Page 2 and 3 for more information.

As part of our goal to improve student well-being, achievement in literacy and mathematics and strengthen positive, safe and inclusive environments, I am pleased to share a Progress Report on the SRCE System Improvement Plan for 2022-2023, information on how schools are tracking and monitoring student progress using school data walls as well as a number of excellent examples of student learning in action throughout the SRCE. Please see Page 4 and 5 for additional details.

In addition, planning has now started for the 2023-2024 school year. Pre-primary and primary registrations have been completed and staffing plans are underway. As well at this time of year, the school calendar is finalized, and capital projects for the 2023-2024 are being considered. As with all plans, our number one goal of improving student well-being, achievement and success is at the forefront of all decisions.

As always, I encourage you to watch for information on our school and regional celebrations in print, on our website (www.srce.ca) and the SRCE twitter (@SRCE_NS).

Sincerely,



Paul Landry
Regional Executive Director of Education



Paul Landry
Regional Executive Director
of Education

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Upcoming Dates/Events

Wednesday, March 8, 2023
International Women's Day

March 13 to 17, 2023
March Break

Tuesday, March 21, 2023
International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

Strait Regional Centre for Education
304 Pitt Street, Unit 2
Port Hawkesbury, NS B9A 2T9;
www.srce.ca; srce@srce.ca;
902-625-2191/
1-800-650-4448 (P)
902-625-2281 (F)



Follow us on Twitter
@SRCE_NS



Darrell Leblanc, Director of Programs and Student Services; Kathy Rhodes, Coordinator of African Canadian Education Services; Kenyatta Boakeye, Guest Vocalist and former SRCE Student; Crystal States, Program Officer, Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs; and Paul Landry, Regional Executive Director (left to right).

At the February 15, 2023, Principals' Meeting, I had the pleasure of welcoming Guest Vocalist Kenyatta Boakeye and Guest Speaker, Crystle States, Program Officer, Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs. Kenyatta, Boakeye opened our meeting by singing O Canada and the Black National Anthem, Lift Every Voice and Sing. Crystle States conducted a Libation Ceremony followed by a presentation on the role of the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs. Sincere thanks to them for sharing their knowledge, experience and talents to make our African Heritage Month celebrations so special and impactful.

SRCE Celebrates African Heritage Month 2023 - Seas of Struggle: African Peoples from Shore to Shore

February is recognized internationally as African Heritage Month – a time to celebrate and share the culture, history and achievements of people of African descent from all over the world. The African Heritage Month 2023 theme, *Seas of Struggle: African Peoples from Shore to Shore*, recognizes the resiliency, strength, and determination of people of African descent from the shores of Africa to the shores of Nova Scotia -- with the Atlantic Ocean being the everlasting connection.

Throughout the school year, and especially in February, teachers incorporate a variety of educational lessons in their classroom instruction that focus on the history, culture and achievements of people of African descent. African Heritage Month provides another opportunity for all of us to join in the celebration and promotion of the culture, legacy, achievements, and contributions of people of African descent in Nova Scotia – past and present.

As part of the celebrations this year, the week of **February 13 to 17, 2023, was designated as African Heritage Month Reading Week**. During this week, community elders, parents, guardians and regional staff will be invited to read with students. In addition, teachers will incorporate the Re-Imagine African Heritage Month resources in a variety of thought-provoking educational lessons in their classroom instruction to support student learning as they listen to one another's perspectives, interpretation and views of the world; learn about our shared history; share and celebrate cultures; and discuss ways to act to make our communities a better place for all. These learning opportunities will focus on diversity, inclusion and equity to highlight the connection of our past to today and how this information shapes and enhances our understanding. This is also the perfect time for each of us to reflect on our shared history and understanding of the contributions and traditions of people of African descent.



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 14
Launch of #SRCEAfricanHeritageReadingWeek2023 in the #SRCE as part of the #AfricanHeritageMonth2023 celebrations!

Whycomomagh Education Centre @WhycomomaghEC · Feb 13
African Literacy Week has kicked off at WEC today with our RCH coordinator, Kathy Rhodes, reading to our students. Literature is one of the best ways to help kids understand something without necessarily having to experience it for themselves.



RED Paul Landry reads with Grade Primary/1 French Immersion students at East Richmond Education Centre as part of African Heritage Month Reading Week.

These initiatives also align well with the SRCE System Improvement Plan goal to foster student well-being through the creation of safe, positive, inclusive and culturally responsive learning and work environments.

I would like to acknowledge the work of our employees of African descent. The importance of having role models for our students cannot be overstated and I am pleased our students of African descent see themselves reflected in the role models in our schools.

I firmly believe education brings equality and if we continue our collaboration and ongoing work with education partners, our efforts will bring many positive results and successes for our students.

For more information, please access the online news story, [SRCE Celebrates African Heritage Month 2023 - Seas of Struggle: African Peoples from Shore to Shore](#).

Did You Know?

The Afrikan Canadian Heritage and Friendship Centre is located in Chedabucto Education Centre/Guysborough Academy and officially opened in November of 2001.



The Centre provides Afrocentric lessons and resources to schools throughout the SRCE and partners with the local and provincial African Nova Scotian community to foster cultural awareness and cross-cultural understanding.

Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 6
 #SRCEStudentLearningInAction as part of the #AfricanHeritageMonth2023 celebrations.

Antigonish Ed Centre @AntEdCentre · Feb 3
 Ms. Stacey visited grade 2 to share the amazing story of Viola Desmond!

Chedabucto Education Centre/Guysborough... @ChedE... · Feb 1
 What a way to kick off African Heritage Month! The ACHFC hosted Warden Vernon Pitts and Councillor Mary Desmond for the declaration of African Heritage Month. Huge shout out to Mr Miller and the gr 4 class for the beautiful singing at the event!

Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 17
 #SRCEAfricanHeritageReadingWeek2023

SRCE Literacy @SRCE_Literacy · Feb 16
 Our literacy coordinator had a wonderful afternoon reading to students @FelixMarchandEC ❤️ #SRCEAfricanHeritageReadingWeek2023 @nseducation

St. Andrews Consolidated School @saceagles · Feb 7
 Grade 4 Students from Mr Marchand's and Mrs. Duykers class enjoyed a class trip to the African Canadian Heritage Friendship Centre/Chedabucto Lifestyle Complex. Students had a presentation for African Heritage month and an outdoor skate

Whycocomagh Education Centre @WhycocomaghEC · Feb 7
 The Crayon Box that Talked was one of our highlights at our African Heritage Assembly. The book helps students understand that when we all work together the results are much more colourful and interesting.



RED Paul Landry reads with Grade 1 students at St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy.

Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 13
 Another beautiful and educational display of #ArtEducation as part of the #AfricanHeritageMonth2023 celebrations.

St. Andrew Junior School @StAndrewJunior · Feb 11
 More beautiful inspired art at SAJS! Ms. Gero's 5/6 class was inspired by Kehinde Wiley's work. The colors are amazing! Mrs. MacInnis' 6-1 created their own African masks. Beautiful! #AfricanHeritageMonth

Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 22
 #AfricanHeritageMonth2023

Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High Sc... @DrJHGRegio... · Feb 22
 Thank you to our guests from the Maritime Centre for African Dance for the awesome sessions today.


[Access Video Link of Bayview Education Centre Students Singing a Gaelic Song](#)

Bayview Education Centre @BayviewEdCentre · Feb 7
A little Gaelic song to brighten your day! #Sing #gaelic #SRCE



0:27 155 views

Dalbrae Academy @dalbraeacademy · Feb 22
Enjoying our new reading area 📖 @SRCE_Literacy



Fanning Education Centre/Canso Ac... @FanningECCa... · Feb 14
Our pre-primaries were so excited to make Valentines for Canso Seaside Manor residents! We heard they LOVED every one! #caringcommunities



St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy @StMarysEdCentr1 · Feb 3
Today Shubenacadie Sam saw his shadow and so did the Grade Two's! We enjoyed reading Doretta Groenendyk new book "Groundhog Night". It inspired our art for the day! @SRCE_Literacy @dorettaGroenendyk



Tamarac Education Centre @TEC_6650 · Feb 24
Reading buddies with grade 1 and grade 5/6 French Immersion.



Inverness Education Centre/Academy @InvernessECA · Feb 10
Check out our Grade 12s. They are extracting DNA from wheat.



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Feb 15
Wow, great job Grade 4! Special thanks to you and the entire school community for this phenomenal support. #KindnessMatters

East Antigonish Education Centre/Acad... @EastAntE... · Feb 15
Our grade 4s completed their food drive today by delivering 850 lbs of food to the food bank! They were so excited to be able to help the community and see all the good work the food bank does! @SRCE_NS



Richmond Education Centre/Academy @Richmond_ECA · Feb 17
Snowshoeing and PJ Day!! Mode de Vie Actif 11 class, with Mlle. Sam Martell, enjoying a beautiful day! #studentwellness



Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High Sch... @DrJHGRegion... · Feb 16
On Feb 8th, the African Nova Scotian students from DrJ were invited to participate with artist Kate MacDonalld at StFX. The students enjoyed a writing circle, had a chance to explore the connections between creative writing, expression, resistance, mobilization, & activism.



I am very pleased to provide a progress report on the SRCE’s System Improvement Plan for 2022-2023. The report may be accessed at the following link:

[System Improvement Plan 2022-2023 Progress Report](#)



The Strait Regional Centre for Education Programs and Student Services team worked in consultation with principals and vice principals, as well as teachers from across the region, who represented all grades, subject/specialty areas and years of experience, to develop a System Improvement Plan for the 2022-2023 school year. The establishment of goals and priorities evolved from a comprehensive review of evidence of student learning, research and educational literature emphasizing the emotional, motivational and affective elements that need to be fostered in order to facilitate learning and develop the whole student.

The 2022-2023 System Improvement Plan is responsive to recent results in student achievement and trends over time. It also represents an understanding of the important connection between student well-being and achievement, and the critical need to provide all students with the conditions where they feel a sense of belonging to achieve their full potential. All goals, priorities and implementation strategies have been developed through an inclusive, equitable and culturally responsive lens to ensure that all students have access to a variety of supports and services to facilitate greater success.

For more information, please access the complete plan at [SRCE System Improvement Plan for 2022-2023](#) and access the infographic below or online at [SRCE System Improvement Plan 2022-2023 Infographic](#).

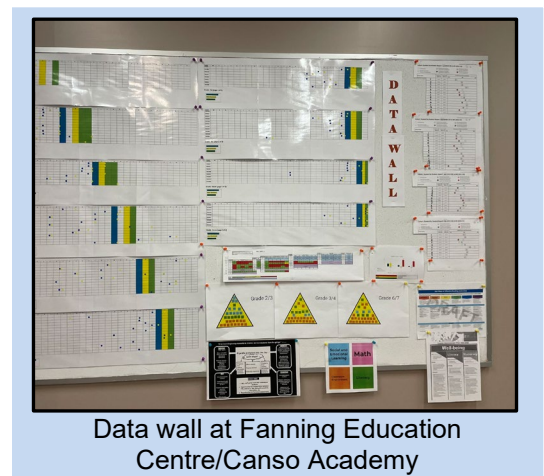
Monitoring Student Progress Using School Data Walls

Many of our schools have created data walls as an additional tool to help them keep track and monitor student progress. Data walls provide a visual representation of the strengths and needs of all students using multiple data sources. This information leads to collaborative discussion among teachers around learning patterns, setting targets, effective teaching practices and required professional learning; all focused on a school-wide culture of learning.

In particular, data walls generate questions and focused conversations about school improvement planning:

- What is making us proud?
- What are our concerns?
- In what areas are our students struggling?
- What supports are students able to access?
- Are we having impact on student growth and achievement?
- How can we collectively work together to improve learning for all students?

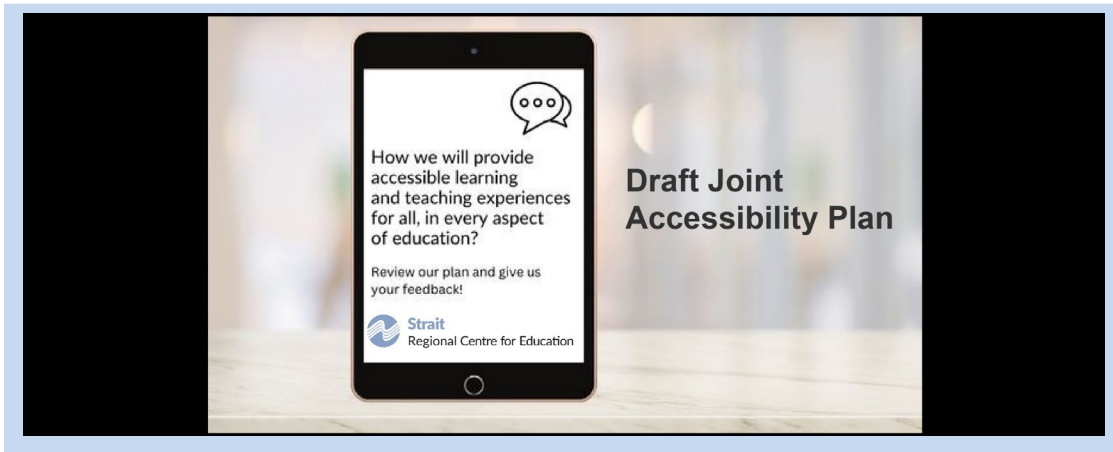
The data walls are designed to show growth and achievement over time and are updated at multiple points throughout the school year. Staff organize student data on their data walls. This is a critical first step to meet the differentiated learning needs of students in each school and is key to measuring any impact of the interventions implemented to support student learning.



Data wall at Fanning Education Centre/Canso Academy



Invitation to Share Feedback on the Draft Joint Accessibility Plan



The Nova Scotia Accessibility Act recognizes accessibility as a human right and sets a goal of an accessible Nova Scotia by 2030. Please visit [Access by Design 2030: Achieving an Accessible Nova Scotia](#) to learn more about how the province will achieve this goal.

Nova Scotia's seven regional centres for education and the Conseil scolaire acadien provincial are responsible for developing a multi-year plan to ensure accessibility in public education. Together, we created a Draft Joint Accessibility Plan, outlining *how we will provide accessible learning and teaching experiences for all, in every aspect of education*. We are now looking for feedback from families and staff.

You are invited to review our draft plan and provide input through *ThoughtExchange*. We would appreciate hearing from you about what works, what needs improvement and what we might be missing. It is quick, easy and anonymous. You can read and rate the thoughts of others – and contribute as often as you like.

How to Get Started

- To review the Plan in English, please access the [Draft Joint Accessibility Plan](#).
- To review the Plan in French, please access the [Plan d'accessibilité conjoint \(provisoire\)](#).
- To share your feedback, please access [ThoughtExchange](#).
- If you prefer to share your feedback by email, please send your input to srce@srce.ca.

This consultation will continue until Wednesday, March 8, 2023.

Your feedback is valuable and will help inform our final plan. This is a critical first step in creating accessible public education in Nova Scotia by 2030.

Policy Development and Review Update

The Strait Regional Centre for Education encourages participation in its policy and procedure development and review process.

The SRCE is currently undertaking a review of the following policies and procedures and invites input. A copy of the proposed draft policies and supporting procedures may be accessed at the following links or by contacting the SRCE Regional Office:

[Employment Equity, Policy V-A-5](#)

[Employment Equity supporting procedures, PRO V-A-5](#)

[Regional Centre Staff Conflict of Interest Policy V-B-5](#)

To view a copy of the **current policies and procedural documents**, please access the following links:

- [Employment Equity, Policy V-A-5](#)
- [Employment Equity supporting procedures, PRO V-A-5](#)
- [School Board Staff Conflict of Interest Policy V-B-5](#)

Please provide feedback, in writing, on or by Friday, March 3, 2023, to:

Strait Regional Centre for Education
 304 Pitt Street, Unit 2, Port Hawkesbury, NS, B9A2T9
 Phone (902) 625-2191 Fax (902) 625-2281
 Email: srce@srce.ca

Notice to All Grades Primary to Six and Learning Support Teachers Regarding the Hiring Pool Process for External Hires



Strait
Regional Centre for Education

Are you a qualified Grade Primary to Six or Learning Support Teacher?

The SRCE invites you to submit your application for consideration.

Throughout the 2023-2024 school year, the SRCE will be using a hiring pool process for external postings of:

- Grades Primary to Six Teachers
- Learning Support Teachers

These hiring pool postings do not apply to permanent/probationary teachers and teachers with recall status.

How the Process Works:

Applicants will be screened for a specific pool interview based on their application and specifications outlined in the job posting.

If interviewed and appointed to the hiring pool, candidates must then apply to specific school vacancies in external postings.

Applicants to specific positions may be selected from the applicable hiring pool and the successful candidates will be notified by email by the Human Resources Department.

FIND NEW CAREER OPTIONS AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES WITH THE SRCE!

Application Dates:
Hiring pool postings will be open for applications from **Monday, February 20, 2023 to Friday, March 17, 2023.**

How to Apply:
Qualified candidates must apply online through SuccessFactors accessible on the SRCE website at srce.ca through the *Join the SRCE Team* icon.

902-625-7081
1-800-650-4448
hr_clerical@srce.ca

srce.ca
jobs.ednet.ns.ca
[@SRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/SRCE_NS) on Twitter

Support the children and youth in the Strait Region by joining the SRCE team!

 There is no team like the SRCE TEAM!

Congratulations!

I would like to congratulate **Jamie Parsons, Teacher at Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy** on his recent **Loran Teachers Building Leaders Award** through the Loran Scholars Foundation.

Mr. Parsons was nominated by Campbell Hart, a graduate of CBHEC/A and 2018 Loran Scholar. Campbell Hart describes Mr. Parsons as a teacher who always supported his passions and aspirations, and developed positive relationships and connections with students.

The Loran Teachers Building Leaders Award recognizes primary and secondary school teachers who provide early inspiration, guidance and growth opportunities for Loran Scholars.

Each year, graduating Loran Scholars are invited to show gratitude to the teachers who impacted their lives by nominating them for a Loran Teachers Building Leaders Award.

Each teacher recipient is recognized by the nominating Loran Scholar at a local certificate presentation.

Invitation to Become a Host Family in the SRCE

The SRCE continues to recruit families to host international students. Welcome the world into your home by hosting an international student. Become a host family and create friends for life.

You will be surprised at the many ways your family grows when you become a host family. Your hospitality can make all the difference to a student's experience, and it is our hope that by becoming a host family, it will mark the beginning of a relationship that will last a lifetime! Learn more about this exciting opportunity at <https://nsisp.ca/become-host-family>.

For more information about becoming a host family in the SRCE, please contact:

Chris Penny, Manager, SRCE-ISP
chris.penny@srce.ca; 902-625-7083



Jamie Parsons receives the Loran Teachers Building Leaders Award at a school presentation. Campbell Hart joined the presentation virtually.



BRING THE WORLD HOME

When you host an international student you may be surprised at how your family will grow

Visit nsisp.ca/become-host-family for more information on how to become an NSISP host family

Nova Scotia International Student Program

Information on Class and/or Bus Service Delays and/or Cancellations Due to Weather and/or Road Conditions

As a reminder, I ask parents and guardians to review their backup plan with their children in the event there are decisions made to delay or cancel bus service or classes due to weather and/or road conditions.

Our preference is always to have our students in school. We recognize that parents and guardians are concerned when their children miss class time, and we share this concern. That is why our decision to cancel classes is not made lightly and is made with the safety of students and staff as the first priority.

The vast majority of our students are bused to school and our region covers a large geographic area of 11,000 sq. km. Due to our large geographic region, it is very important that we gather information from many sources beginning very early in the morning, around 5:00 a.m., to enable us to make an informed decision and announce it prior to 6:30 a.m., to the degree possible, to help families plan accordingly.



The Decision-Making Process

The Strait Regional Centre for Education follows a comprehensive decision-making process and detailed procedures to make decisions resulting in delays or cancellations to bus service or classes in schools(s). Our decision-making process includes consultations with, and a review of information from, the following:

- The SRCE Manager of Transportation and Director of Operations;
- Staff who personally travel on the roads very early in the morning evaluating road and weather conditions;
- Weather forecasting services including Environment Canada, WSP Weather Information System, and The Weather Network;
- Local region contacts (staff);
- Neighbouring Regional Centres for Education;
- Provincial highway cameras;
- The Nova Scotia Department of Public Works; and
- RCMP, if required.

There are six possible phases of cancellations:

Phase I: Cancellation of a Bus Run or Runs

Phase II: Cancellation of Bus Service on Unpaved Roads

Phase III: Cancellation of Classes due to Inclement Weather

Phase IV: Delayed Opening of Schools

Phase V: Early Dismissal: Predicted and Deteriorating Weather/Road Conditions During the Day

Phase VI: Partial or Complete System Shutdown/Schools and Buildings Closed

How to Stay Informed

You are encouraged to check all available information sources as noted below to ensure you are up to date regarding class and bus service announcements:

- Check our website, www.srce.ca and specifically the [Cancellations and Announcements](#) image on the main page of the website. Please note there are two tabs on this page, School and Worksite Cancellations and Announcements are found under the first tab at the bottom of the page and Bus Route Cancellations and Announcements are found under the second tab.
- Follow us on Twitter at [Twitter.com/SRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/SRCE_NS).
- Listen to local radio stations.
- Subscribe to receive class cancellation and/or bus route notices via email and/or text at https://www.srce.ca/news/stay_informed.

Contact Information

- Transportation Department Staff: 902-747-3645; 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. / transportation@srce.ca
- Operations Centre Dispatch Staff: 902-747-3642; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- Emergency Bussing Telephone Number: 902-747-3642; 6:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For more information about class cancellation and/or bus service announcements, please refer to the following documents:

[Class and/or Bus Delays/Cancellations Due to Weather and/or Road Conditions: A Quick Reference Guide](#)

[Class and/or Bus Delays/Cancellations Due to Weather and/or Road Conditions Procedures](#)

Nova Scotia HomeworkHUB APPUlauxdevoirs Nouvelle-Ecosse

NEED HELP WITH A MATH QUESTION?

GNSPES Access
Click the Nova Scotia Homework Hub icon

Available 24/7
- textbooks
- videos
- practice questions
- vocabulary review

Bilingual Tutors
Tutors for Grade 4 - 6
Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday
5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

1-888-444-6607 Nova Scotia HomeworkHUB APPUlauxdevoirs Nouvelle-Ecosse gnspes.ca

Nova Scotia HomeworkHUB APPUlauxdevoirs Nouvelle-Ecosse

NEED HELP WITH A MATH QUESTION?

GNSPES Access
Click the Nova Scotia Homework Hub icon

Available 24/7
- textbooks
- videos
- practice questions
- vocabulary review

Bilingual Tutors
Tutors for Grade 7 - 12
Sunday through Thursday
5:30 - 9:30 p.m.

1-888-444-6607 Nova Scotia HomeworkHUB APPUlauxdevoirs Nouvelle-Ecosse gnspes.ca

School and SRCE Message System to Families

The SRCE and all schools are using a messaging system that requires action from parents/guardians if you wish to receive text messages from your child's school and the SRCE.

As a reminder, if you have a cell number on file at your child's school and have not yet opted in to receive text messages from the school and the SRCE, **please text Yes to 978338 to continue to receive text messages. If you do not opt in, you will not receive text messages.** Message and data rates may apply; and message frequency varies.

You can always opt out in the future by replying to a text message with *STOP*. Please direct follow-up questions to your child's school.

Notice to Families



The SRCE and all schools are using a new messaging system to send texts.

Parents/Guardians, if you have a cell number on file at your child's school and have not yet opted in to receive text messages, **please text Yes to 978338 to continue to receive text messages.**

If you do not opt in, you will no longer receive text messages.



Who Do I Contact with Questions or Concerns?



- 1 Start with your child's teacher.
- 2 Follow up with the school principal, if required.
- 3 For general inquiries, please contact the SRCE where we will be happy to connect you with the right member of staff: 902-625-2191/srce@srce.ca.
- 4 For questions related to student behaviour and/or discipline, please contact Elizabeth Teasdale, Coordinator of Student Discipline by phone at 902-625-7065 or by email at elizabeth.teasdale@srce.ca.
- 5 For all other matters and media inquiries, please contact Deanna Gillis, Coordinator of Communications by phone at 902-625-7093 or by email at deanna.gillis@srce.ca.

