

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

October 2023

October is a month when we reflect on the many people we are thankful for in our lives and the beautiful region of our province we live in.

I would first like to thank students, staff and families for their continued cooperation and support during these first couple of months of the school year.

I would also like to thank all those who are serving on School Advisory Councils, including students, staff and community members. The SRCE appreciates your time and commitment to your school communities and your positive and meaningful contributions.

As part of our goal to strengthen positive, safe and inclusive environments, I am proud to share more of the many thoughtful ways that Mi'kmaw History Month, Treaty Education and *Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters* were celebrated by students and staff. Together, through our collective efforts to celebrate and respect each other through education and action, we continue to learn about and embrace our cultures and build understanding of our shared history as part of the reconciliation process. Please see more information on Page 2.

Through my monthly reports, I am pleased to share information and photographs on the many initiatives and activities led by our school-based and regional staff that are supporting and improving our students' well-being, achievement and overall success. As always, I encourage you to watch for information about our school and regional celebrations in print, on our website (www.srce.ca) and on the social media platform X (formerly 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

Friday, November 3, 2023

Administration/Evaluation Day (no classes PP-8 / Regular Classes Gr. 9 to 12)

Monday, November 13, 2023

Remembrance Day Observance (No School)

Thursday, November 23, 2023

In-service Day at All Schools (In-service in a.m. / Parent-Teacher in p.m. – no classes PP-12)

Who Do I Contact with Questions or Concerns?



Strait
Regional Centre for Education

1 For curriculum or classroom-related questions, start with your child's teacher. If required, follow up with the school principal.

2 For questions about the Pre-primary Program, start with your child's Lead Early Childhood Educator. If required, follow up with the Manager of Pre-primary Programs at carolyn.webber@srce.ca.

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 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.

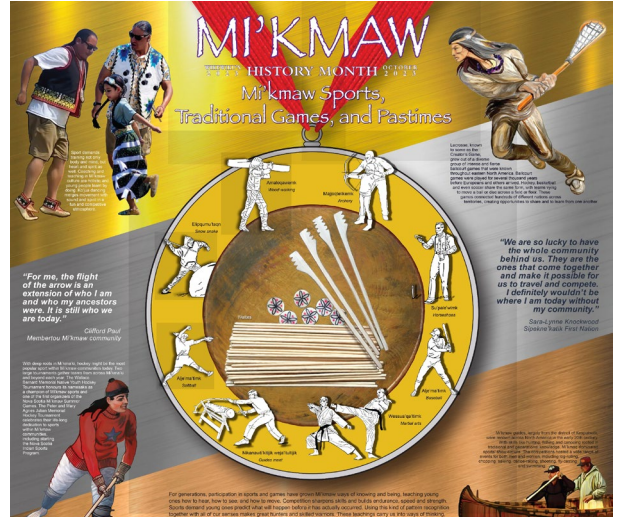


SRCE Celebrates Mi'kmaw History Month 2023: Mi'kmaw Sports, Traditional Games and Pastimes

October 1 is Treaty Day and marks the beginning of Mi'kmaw History Month in Nova Scotia. Throughout the year, and especially in October, teachers incorporate a variety of educational activities in their classroom instruction to highlight the connection of our past to today and how this information shapes our understanding of our shared history. In addition, schools organize activities to enhance Treaty Education.

In the spirit of peace, friendship, truth and reconciliation, the Strait Regional Centre for Education encourages students, staff, parents/guardians, families and community partners to share in the celebration of Mi'kmaw History Month 2023. Please access more information and online educational resources in the website story: [SRCE Celebrates Mi'kmaw History Month 2023](#).

We Are All Treaty People. Every Child Matters / E'tasiw mijuaj'jij sespete'tasit.



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 13
Learning and celebrating #MikmawHistoryMonth2023.



SRCE Equity @SRCE_Equity · Oct 12
Thank you @ChedECGA high school students for your thoughtfulness and beautiful display!



East Richmond Education Centre @EastRichmondEC · Sep 29
What a beautiful day at EREC today! Thank you Trevor, Stephanie, Jolita and Miss Candice #TruthAndReconciliationDay #EREC Proud



Fanning Education Centre/Canso Acad... @FanningECCan... · Sep 30
Staff and students participated in a number of activities for Orange Shirt Day. We read books, played Waites, danced the Koj'u'a, and made buttons. We look forward to learning so much more the entire month of October.



St. Andrews Consolidated School @sacseagles · Sep 29
The Grade 4 and 3/4 class honoured and recognized those that endured the residential school system by painting rocks with words to demonstrate their understanding of truth and reconciliation. Rocks were placed around the school to spark important conversations



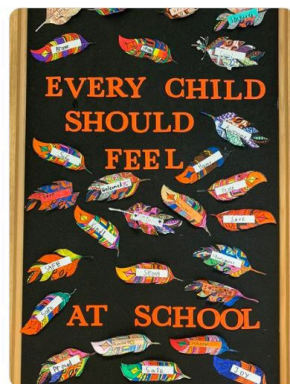
Tamarac Education Centre @TEC_6650 · Oct 3
TEC grade 1 Imm recognizing Mi'kmaw History Month!



Inverness Education Centre/Academy @InvernessECA · Sep 29
We acknowledged that residential schools are a part of our history today by wearing our ORANGE, and learning about the experience of those who went to residential schools.



SRCE Equity @SRCE_Equity · Oct 5
Yes. Yes they should. Thanks to students @EastAntECA for this beautiful reminder for everyone to work together to ensure all children belong. #TruthAndReconciliation



Earlier this year, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development [asked teachers for input through Ideas for Education](#). The purpose of this ask was to listen and learn from teachers who have good ideas that will help improve student achievement and outcomes. Now, those ideas are being put into action.



Some of the teacher-initiated ideas in the SRCE that will be piloted are:

- Teacher appreciation
- Teacher mentors
- Elementary math specialist
- Expand junior high support group
- Dedicated teacher to provide extra support
- Hire permanent substitute teachers

More information on these ideas will be shared throughout the school year.

SRCE Enrolment 2023-2024

School	Grades	Enrolment Sept. 30/2023
Antigonish Education Centre	P-4	566
Bayview Education Centre	P-8	254
Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy	P-12	330
Chedabucto Education Centre/ Guysborough Academy	P-12	267
Dalbrae Academy	9-12	249
Dr. J.H. Gillis Regional High School	9-12	768
East Antigonish Education Centre/Academy	P-12	286
East Richmond Education Centre	P-8	291
Fanning Education Centre/Canso Academy	P-12	160
Felix Marchand Education Centre	P-4	69
H.M. MacDonald Elementary School	P-6	76
Inverness Education Centre/Academy	P-12	299
Pleasant Bay School	P-6	12
Richmond Education Centre/Academy	5-12	312
St. Andrew Junior School	5-8	597
St. Andrews Consolidated School	P-6	248
St. Mary's Education Centre/Academy	P-12	257
Strait Area Education Recreation Centre (SAERC)	9-12	289
Tamarac Education Centre	P-8	486
Whycomomagh Education Centre	P-8	138
Total:		5,954

SafeArrival: Student Absence Reporting System to be Implemented at SRCE Schools



To enhance the existing safe arrival process for reporting student absences from school, a new, more efficient student absence reporting system called **SafeArrival** will be implemented at all schools in the SRCE during this school year.

This new system will help improve student safety, reduce the time it takes to verify student attendance, make it easy for you to report your student's absence and easy for staff to respond to unexplained student absences.

With **SafeArrival**, parents and guardians will be asked to report your student's absence in advance using any of the following convenient methods:

1. **Mobile Device (Using the free SchoolMessenger App)**
2. **SchoolMessenger (SafeArrival) Website**
3. **Interactive Toll-free Phone Number**

These three options will be available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week, and future absences may be reported at any time.

More information will be shared with families by your respective school when implementation of the SafeArrival system is scheduled.

Did You Know?

- ✓ There are 386 children attending the Pre-primary Program at 14 school locations in the SRCE.

Student Learning in Action in the SRCE

I am pleased to continue to share some excellent examples of the impressive student learning happening throughout the region to foster student well-being, achievement and success through the creation of positive, safe, inclusive and culturally responsive learning environments. I would like to recognize the amazing efforts of our teachers and support staff for the many innovative and creative strategies they are using to engage and support student learning and well-being.

Bayview Education Centre @BayviewEdCentre · Oct 11
"Book and Board" is a hit - lunch time activities for students in our library - thanks to Mr DeBarth for organizing!



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 6
Beautifully done! #ArtEducation

Dalbrae Academy @dalbraeacademy · Oct 6
Beautiful pumpkin string art 🍂



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 18
An excellent hands-on learning opportunity for students to further explore their interests and the skilled trades as possible career options!

Dr. John Hugh Gillis Regional High Sch... @DrJHGRegion... · Oct 17
Skilled Trades 10 students working on their chiseling project @Skills_NS



East Richmond Education Centre @EastRichmondEC · Oct 6
Grade P-1 and 3-4 Immersion students did their buddy reading in our flexible learning space!



SRCE Literacy @SRCE_Literacy · Oct 20
Guided reading helps the teacher support the student's development of effective reading competencies 📖
#SRCESixPillarsOfEffectiveReadingInstruction @nseducation @FelixMarchandEC



H.M. MacDonald Elementary School @HMMSchool · Oct 4
Writing Buddies was such a fun way to create new stories!! @SRCE_Literacy @SRCE_NS 📖❤️



Inverness Education Centre/Academy @InvernessECA · Oct 5
Our Learning Centre kitchen was busy today as we prepare foods for our breakfast and snack programs!



SRCE Literacy @SRCE_Literacy · Oct 18
What a fabulous way to celebrate becoming authors, promote oral language and reading and writing skills!!! Students from grade 5/6 Core French joined the grade P/1 Immersions to share their books "Dans ma Famille". 📖❤️
#SRCEGrowingWriters #SRCEGrowingReaders @nseducation



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 20
#SRCEStudentLearningInAction #SciencelsFun

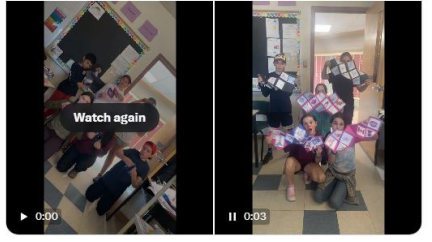
SAERC @SAERC_Official · Oct 20
Exploring the wonders of biology at SAERC! 📖 Biology 11 students delve into the impact of different colored lights on photosynthesis rates. 🌱 #PhotosynthesisStudy 📖🔬



[Watch Video](#)

Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 17
#SRCEStudentLearningInAction

St. Andrew Junior School @StAndrewJunior · Oct 13
Our Grade 6 Imm class created "explosion" books with Canadian symbols. 🇨🇦



Strait Regional Centre for Education @SRCE_NS · Oct 13
Thank you for your thoughtfulness! #KindnessMatters

Tamarac Education Centre @TEC.6650 · Oct 12
TEC 7/8 Imm class supporting local food bank!



SRCE Literacy @SRCE_Literacy · 40m
Today our Literacy Coordinator spent the day at Pleasant Bay school creating writing folders with all students! 📖❤️ #SRCEGrowingWriters



The Strait Regional Centre for Education reminds everyone that school bus safety is a shared responsibility. The safe actions of all drivers help to ensure our children and youth travel safely to and from school.

Let's all take extra care and time, and follow these important safety reminders:

- NEVER pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing;
- Report any violations to your local detachment of the RCMP and SRCE Transportation staff at 902-747-3645;
- Slow down and follow speed limits in school zones;
- Pay extra attention to children and youth waiting for the school bus or walking to and from school;
- Leave lots of space between your car and the school bus;
- Give yourself extra time to get where you are going;
- Be alert and aware at all times;
- Do not drive distracted;
- Watch for school crossing guards and obey their signals; and
- Bus loops are for buses only. Please follow the posted signage.



Students, parents, guardians, motorists, school bus drivers, Regional Centre staff and our enforcement partners share the responsibility for school bus safety. By working together, we will ensure the bus trip is a safe one.

For more information and resources related to school bus safety, please access the following link:

- [School Bus Safety: A Guide for Families](#)



At Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy, Bus Driver, Melanie Burton, visited elementary classrooms to review school bus safety rules with students. They also discussed the importance of making eye contact with the bus driver, looking both ways and seeing the red lights activated on the bus before boarding the bus. The students asked lots of excellent questions during the visits.



The Grade 1 class at Inverness Education Centre/Academy practiced a bus evacuation as part of school bus safety week with the help of Mr. Goosens and Ms. Ashley.



Grade 1 French Immersion students at Tamarac Education Centre learned about bus safety and then happily posed for a photo with one of the school buses.

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

As we begin another school year, it is also a good time of year for 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. **Please make sure your current contact information (email address and cell phone) is on file at your student's school.**

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 very 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 school(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, WOOD Weather Information System, and The Weather Network;
- Local region contacts (school bus drivers);
- 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 X (formerly Twitter) at 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; 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. / transportation@srce.ca
- Operations Centre Dispatch Staff: 902-747-3642; 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
- Emergency Busing Phone Number: 902-747-3642; 6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.



Did You Know?

- ✓ SRCE Transportation staff may be contacted by email at transportation@srce.ca or by phone at 902-747-3645.
- ✓ The school bus emergency phone number is 902-747-3642 (6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).