

Regional Executive Director's Report

to School Communities in the Strait Region

Welcome to the 2023-2024 School Year!

It is hard to believe that we are marking close to one month since SRCE staff excitedly welcomed children and students back to school. The beginning of the school year is always an exciting time.

As we settle back into the school year routine, I am very pleased with the work underway to support goals and strategies identified to improve student well-being and student achievement in math and literacy through the creation of positive, safe and inclusive learning environments, the pillars of the SRCE System Improvement Plan. Please refer to Page 3 for more information on the System Improvement Plan and the goals, priorities and strategies that have been developed through an inclusive, equitable and culturally responsive lens to address the needs of all learners and to ensure all students have access to a variety of supports and services to facilitate greater success.

As part of our goal to strengthen positive, safe and inclusive environments, *Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters*, *National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*, *Treaty Day* and *Mi'kmaw History Month* are being honoured by students and staff. Together, through our collective efforts to celebrate and respect each other through education and action on our path to truth and reconciliation, we continue to learn about and embrace our cultures and build understanding of our shared history. 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](https://twitter.com/SRCE_NS).

I wish everyone a safe and successful school year.

Sincerely,

Paul Landry
Regional Executive Director of Education

September 2023



Paul Landry
Regional Executive Director
of Education

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Upcoming Dates/Events

Friday, September 29, 2023
Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters

Saturday, September 30, 2023
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

Sunday, October 1, 2023
Treaty Day

Monday, October 2, 2023
National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Observance (No Classes PP-12)

October
Mi'kmaq History Month

Monday, October 9, 2023
Thanksgiving Day (No Classes PP-12)

Friday, October 27, 2023
Conference Day (No Classes PP-12)

Who Do I Contact with Questions or Concerns?



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.



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 X
(Formerly Twitter)
[@SRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/SRCE_NS)

SRCE Honours Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters / E'tasiw mijuaj'jij sespete'tasit and National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

As **National Day for Truth and Reconciliation** is Saturday, September 30, 2023, the SRCE will honour **Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters/E'tasiw mijuaj'jij sespete'tasit** on Friday, September 29, 2023.

Please access my message to school communities at [RED Message to SRCE School Communities: Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters; National Day for Truth and Reconciliation; Treaty Day and Mi'kmaq History Month](#).

These significant observances provide an important learning opportunity for all of us in the education system to take time to pause, reflect and learn about our shared history, and the impact and harm caused by residential schools in Canada, including here in Nova Scotia. We must not forget the intergenerational harm caused by residential schools and the systemic efforts to eliminate the language, culture and value of Indigenous peoples. It is imperative we continue to work to address systemic racism in our society and continue on the path of truth and reconciliation through Treaty Education.

Teaching and Learning in Classrooms

Throughout the school year, we must ensure we continue to teach this very important part of our history, to increase our efforts to realize the promise of Inclusive Education, and work together affirming survivors, their families and recognizing the generational harm caused by residential schools. Staff are facilitating age-appropriate conversations about residential schools in our classrooms with a particular focus on truth and reconciliation through Treaty Education. Treaty Education allows for each grade level to learn about Mi'kmaq history, treaties, relationships, culture, ways of knowing and reconciliation. These teachings are woven into the curriculum of every grade level throughout the school year.

I will share more on our celebrations to mark Treaty Day and Mi'kmaq History Month in my October Report.

What can we do to honour the truth?

- Learn more about residential schools and why we wear orange as a symbol of awareness at [Orange Shirt Day Initiative](#).
- Learn more about the Mi'kmaq and the rich stories of who they are and their lived experience in this resource: [Teaching about the Mi'kmaq](#).
- Learn about the [Treaties of Peace and Friendship](#), including treaty rights and responsibilities.
- Learn more about National Day for Truth and Reconciliation: [National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation](#).

In the spirit of peace, friendship and hope, I encourage everyone to come together and continue on our path to truth and reconciliation to support inclusive and safe school communities for everyone.

Every Child Matters. We Are All Treaty People.

The SRCE honours:

Orange Shirt Day: Every Child Matters / E'tasiw mijuaj'jij sespete'tasit
Friday, September 29, 2023

National Day for Truth and Reconciliation
Saturday, September 30, 2023

Treaty Day
Sunday, October 1, 2023

Mi'kmaq History Month
October



Strait
Regional Centre for Education





Providing a safe, respectful, welcoming and inclusive learning environment in our schools, where all students feel a sense of belonging, is always our first priority in the SRCE.

Treaty Education is an important way of increasing cultural awareness and understanding of Mi'kmaq Treaty rights and our shared history. It is important to remember the Treaties were signed over 200 years ago in the spirit of peace, friendship and reconciliation. We Are All Treaty People and have a shared responsibility to honour the Treaties and build respectful relationships and take care of one another.

The SRCE supports Treaty Education, and we continue to implement these important learning opportunities in our schools. For more information, please access:

[Treaty Education Resources](#)

[Anti-Racism Resources](#)



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System Improvement Plan 2023-2024

Well-being

1 Foster Student Well-Being Through the Creation of Positive, Safe, Equitable and Inclusive Learning Environments

Support schools to build learning environments where student physical, social and emotional wellness is prioritized by aligning and maximizing well-being, movement and nutrition initiatives.

Support schools to foster strong positive relationships, promote student engagement and improve communication among students, staff and school community.

2 Improve Student Achievement in Literacy

Focus on guided, small group instruction at all grade levels and in all content areas.

Focus on a balance of daily writing, reading, and speaking and listening at all grade levels and in all content areas.

3 Improve Student Achievement in Mathematics

Focus on building positive attitudes, confidence and ability in problem-solving in Grades Primary to 12.

WELL-BEING
Q
LITERACY
MATHEMATICS
Y

As a system, ALL SRCE STAFF have the important responsibility to support student well-being, learning, achievement and overall success. Let's ask ourselves each and every day three questions:

- What did we do today to support, connect, nurture, inspire, and engage with children and youth?
- How are our children and students doing?
- How do we know?



The SRCE Programs and Student Services team worked in consultation with principals, vice principals and teachers from across the region, who represented all grades, subject/specialty areas and years of experience, to develop a System Improvement Plan for the 2023-2024 school year. The establishment of the 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 2023-2024 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.



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Regional Centre for Education

System Improvement Plan 2023-2024

Well-being

Well-being

Goal

- Foster student well-being through the creation of positive, safe, equitable and inclusive learning environments.

Priorities:

- Support schools to build learning environments where student physical, social and emotional wellness is prioritized by aligning and maximizing well-being, movement and nutrition initiatives.
- Support schools to foster strong positive relationships, promote student engagement and improve communication among students, staff and school community.

Strategies:

- Strengthen the impact of Health Promoting Schools (HPS) through collaboration with partners, student engagement, and monitoring and evaluating programs.
- Implement Fresh Food Cart pilot project in schools to offer affordable and nutritious food to students to enhance their overall health.
- Respond to mental health needs as identified through data from student surveys and youth engagement sessions, with various best-practice supports and strategies including Social-Emotional Learning activities (PATHS).
- Increase movement and physical activity throughout the school day by continuing to implement the Active Smarter Kids initiative, which prioritizes the inclusivity, comfort and safety of students, integrates movement into the curriculum and aligns with the Physical Activity Framework.
- Share, model, promote and monitor implementation of school wellness strategies.
- Support inclusive school and classroom communities through the building of positive relationships and utilization of restorative approaches.
- Foster a positive understanding of anti-racism education in Grades 8 to 12 and Treaty Education in Grades 5 and 6.

Literacy

Goal

- Improve student achievement in literacy.

Priorities:

- Focus on guided, small group instruction at all grade levels and in all content areas.
- Focus on a balance of daily writing, reading, and speaking and listening at all grade levels and in all content areas.

Strategies:

- Regional staff and Teaching Support Teams in Grades Primary to 12 will support all teachers to incorporate literacy activities at all grade levels and in all content areas.
- Regional Technology and Programs staff will promote and support the use of digital literacy tools including SORA, RazKids, Troubadour, Google Read and Write, EPIC and Book Creator.
- Teachers in Grades Primary to 12 will implement a balance of individual, small and whole group instruction in all subject areas.
- Schools and teachers in Grades Primary to 12 will promote and celebrate daily authentic writing across all content areas.
- Schools will continue to use data walls as a source of information for instruction and decision-making.

Numeracy

Goal

- Improve student achievement in mathematics.

Priority:

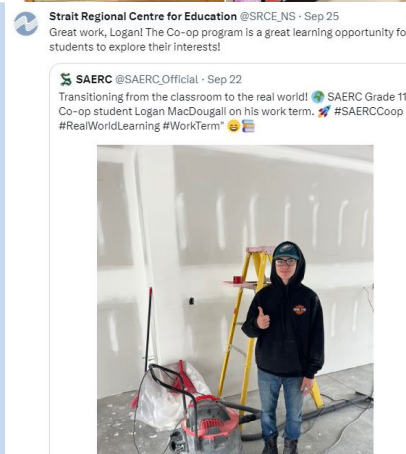
- Focus on building positive attitudes, confidence and ability in problem-solving in Grades Primary to 12.

Strategies:

- Teachers will utilize high impact strategies, grounded in culturally responsive pedagogy, for active learning of mathematics.
- Teachers will use relevant assessment data to inform mathematics instruction.
- Regional Programs staff will support schools in increasing the capacity of Teaching Support Teams to be able to provide support for mathematics within the Multi-Tiered System of Support (MTSS) model.
- Regional Technology and Programs staff will promote and support the use of digital mathematics tools, including Knowledgehook, Equatio and virtual manipulatives.
- Schools will continue to use data walls as a source of information for instruction and decision-making.

WELL-BEING
Q
LITERACY
MATHEMATICS
Y

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.



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 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, 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.



SchoolsPlus Programs, Services and Supports Available to all Students in the SRCE

In the SRCE, we have been very fortunate that all students and families in all schools have had access to services provided by our SchoolsPlus staff since 2014. The first SchoolsPlus Program started in Guysborough in 2008-2009 with the Program expanding to other regions over time.

The vision of SchoolsPlus is to provide increased access for students and their families to the support services of various community and non-profit agencies as well as government departments by using local schools as focal access points. Students and families receive services in their local school communities, which is very helpful as the school serves as the center for service delivery. Programs may be delivered during the day, after school, during March Break and in the summer. These support services are tailored to meet specific needs and may include access to professionals in the fields of social work, healthcare, mental health, the Department of Justice, addiction services, Family Resource Centres and Youth Health Centres.

SRCE SchoolsPlus staff are helping our children, youth and families connect to a range of programs by working and collaborating with school staff and multiple partners and service providers. This model is very much a collaborative one with all partners working closely together to support our students and families. Community partnerships are an integral component of the success of the SchoolsPlus programs in the Strait Region. In the SRCE, there are six SchoolsPlus hub sites. Each of these hub sites offer a range of different programs, services and supports based on the particular needs of the students and families.

Child and Youth Care Practitioners (CYCPs) are an important part of the SchoolsPlus staff supporting students and families throughout the SRCE.



For contact information, please access the [SchoolsPlus](#) page on the SRCE website.

Mental Health Resources and Supports

As a reminder, for our children, youth and families needing support, please note the following resources:

- **SRCE Staff** including school counsellors, school psychologists, student support workers, teachers, student success teachers, school administrators, a Registered Psychotherapist, Regional Equity Team and SchoolsPlus staff are a few of the supports available for our children and youth.
 - Please contact your respective school administration and/or school counsellor – [School Directory 2023-2024](#).
 - SchoolsPlus staff are also available to support children, youth and families and help you access mental health supports and other services you may need. For contact information, please access the [SchoolsPlus](#) page on the SRCE website.
- **Kids Help Phone** is available 24/7, by calling 1-800-668-6868 (toll-free).
 - Children and youth may text TALK to 686868
 - Adults may text WELLNESS to 741741
- **IWK Mental Health Support** is available 24/7
 - Central Referral Service - Please call toll free, 1-855-922-1122 for a referral.
 - Mental Health Crisis Line is available 24/7 to anyone experiencing a mental health or addictions crisis, or someone concerned about them, by calling 1-888-429-8167 (toll free).
- [Nova Scotia Health Mental Health and Additions Program](#)
- [Nova Scotia Mental Health and Well-Being Resources](#)
- [Association of Black Social Workers](#)
- [Health Association of African Canadians](#)

For more information, please access a copy of the [SRCE Mental Health Resources and Services](#).

Education and Early Childhood Development has fully reinstated the Student Attendance and Engagement Policy as of September 1, 2023. You may recall in September of 2020, Education and Early Childhood Development amended parts of the Policy related to loss of credit and attendance in response to the COVID-19 pandemic; these are now back in effect. We continue to encourage students to follow healthy habits and remain at home if they are feeling unwell. As always, school staff will work with families to ensure students' ongoing learning and well-being continues to be supported if they are absent due to medical reasons.

The Student Attendance and Engagement Policy aims to identify and address absenteeism before it becomes a problem for students through early and targeted interventions. You may access the updated policy at [Student Attendance and Engagement Policy](#).

Job Fair for Casual Employees to Support the Cape Breton Highlands Education Centre/Academy School Community



Strait
Regional Centre for Education

FIND NEW
CAREER OPTIONS
AND JOB
OPPORTUNITIES
WITH THE SRCE!

Recruitment and Hiring
Job Fair
Casual Employees



**Cape Breton Highlands
Education Centre/Academy**
11070 Cabot Trail
Terre Noire

Date: Thursday, September 28, 2023
Time: 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Attend the upcoming job fair to learn more and
APPLY ON THE SPOT for one of the following
casual positions:

- Bus Drivers
- Early Childhood Educators
- Janitors
- Lunch and Bus Ground Supervisors
- Permit Substitute Teachers
- School Library Technicians
- School Secretaries
- Substitute Teachers
- Teacher Assistants



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



srce.ca
jobs.ednet.ns.ca
@SRCE_NS on Twitter

Stop in to see us!

We will answer your questions, tell you about
the various roles, and interview interested and
qualified candidates on the spot!

Please bring your résumé.

Did You Know?

Many of these positions have a minimum education
requirement of a high school diploma.

**You can work in multiple positions at various schools
and personalize your work schedule.**



There is no team
like the SRCE TEAM!

School Registration for all Grades, Pre-primary Program and Grade Primary to 12 for the 2023-2024 School Year is Ongoing in the SRCE

Registration for all grades, including the Pre-primary Program and Grade Primary to 12, for the 2023-2024 school year is ongoing in the SRCE.

Please access the following link for more information and to pre-register your child(ren):

[School Registration 2023-2024 \(Pre-primary to Grade 12\)](#)



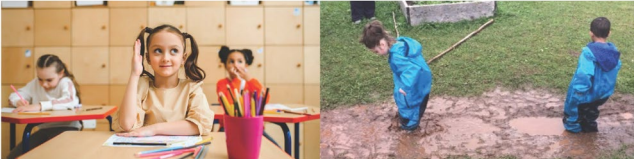
SRCE Academic Calendar 2023-2024



School Registration Information
2023-2024 School Year

Registration for all grades, including the Pre-primary Program, is ongoing in the SRCE.

Please help us plan for the upcoming school year by registering your child.



Did You Know?

- ✓ In the SRCE, busing is available to all pre-primary children and Grades Primary to 12 students who are eligible to receive bus service. Please contact the SRCE Transportation Department staff by email at transportation@srce.ca or by phone at 902-747-3645 to determine your eligibility to receive bus service.

Strait

Regional Centre for Education

2023-2024 CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

of teaching days - 20

OCTOBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

of teaching days - 20

NOVEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

of teaching days - 21

DECEMBER 2023

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

of teaching days - 14

JANUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

of teaching days - 22

FEBRUARY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

of teaching days - 20

MARCH 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

of teaching days - 15

APRIL 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

of teaching days - 21

MAY 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

of teaching days - 22

JUNE 2024

S	M	T	W	Th	F	S
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

of teaching days - 20

Summative Assessment Days

Inservice/PD/Assessment & Evaluation Days

School Holidays/Observances

Report Cards and Parent-Teacher Conferences

Approved: February 27, 2023

Revised: March 27, 2023

Invitation to Become a Host Family in the SRCE

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

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


Nova Scotia
HomeworkHUB




APPUilauxdevoirs
Nouvelle-Écosse




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

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Nouvelle-Écosse



NEED HELP WITH A
MATH QUESTION?



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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



APPUilauxdevoirs
Nouvelle-Écosse

gnspes.ca

School and SRCE Message System to Families

The SRCE and all schools use a messaging system to share information with families via email and/or text. **The system requires parents/guardians to opt in 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 the short code, 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.

