

St. Agnes Junior High

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Barrett Khan- Principal Jarrett Feeney- Vice-Principal

Principal's Message

It is hard to believe that we are fast approaching the holidays and the New Year. The autumn has gone quickly here at St. Agnes Junior High School as we have navigated our present realities going to school amidst the global COVID-19 pandemic. We have been immensely proud of the high level of cooperation and compliance our students have demonstrated with social distancing, wearing masks, and washing their hands while at school though there continues to be room for improvement.

There have been many innovative learning experiences that our students have taken part in while in their classrooms and outside for a breath of fresh air. Though our curricular and extra-curricular experiences have had to be reconfigured with additional safety measures due to our state of emergency and adherence to present public health protocols. We continue to be extremely appreciative of our teacher's efforts and delighted that our student council, art club and coding club were able to get started along with our school's acknowledgement of the importance to "Stand Up to Bullying", appreciate more deeply the impacts of the Residential School system within First Nations communities across Canada through "Orange Shirt Day", and pay tribute to our veterans on Remembrance Day. We also hosted the 1st part of our Grade 7 provincial vaccination program led by staff from Public Health in early November.

Our staff leaned in at our recent Professional Development on the morning of December 3rd to better understand, identify, and disrupt *Anti-Black Racism*. We also engaged in a reflection on where we were as individuals, and as a school. We were appreciative of the high level of staff engagement with this important cornerstone of human rights education.

As you are most likely aware, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD) has adjusted our school schedule to end for the holiday break on Dec. 18th with students returning on January 11, 2021. Staff will return on January 4, 2021 to engage in continued learning around increasing their familiarity with our alternate provincial plans for school including the possibility of remote learning.

We very much appreciate your on-going support of our school. Wishing a joyous and safe holiday season to our student's and families celebrating Christmas, Hanukkah, and Kwanzaa. Happy New Year.



Upcoming Events

December 18

Last Day of School

January 4

Staff return to school

January 11

Students return to school

February 15

Edward Francis Arab Day

March 15-19

March Break

Athletics

Covid has tested our Gators' resolve but they have certainly kept their chins up and persevered on a daily basis! Physical Education class has proven to be a prime destination for this extra effort, whether it has been during yoga, dance, 4Corner Soccer, or Quad Ball, the young people of SAJH have continued to amaze us.

Mr. Starzomski and Mr. Verbeski have witnessed moments of picking each other up when someone may have been having a tough day, laughter amongst peers in creating their own dance, and amazing skills in 4 Corner Soccer. Through all of the ups and downs, we certainly classify this 1st term as a resounding success for our students where creativity and positivity has been the name of the game. We look forward to adding to this solid start when we return in 2021! Stay healthy and active over the holidays and wishing all a restful break."

SchoolsPlus

Your SchoolsPlus Community Outreach Worker is Laura Hutt. She will be at the school every Tuesday. The role of a community outreach worker is to build bridges between home, school and the community. They will work with the family to address barriers experienced, and help them navigate different resources and systems to best support them. This can include things such as; connecting community resources and school resources, parenting programming, attending meetings with families, and providing transportation to needed services. Please feel free to contact Laura at 902-456 5972 or email lhutt@hrce.ca

Call To Remembrance

This year, St Agnes Jr High was able to conduct a virtual Remembrance Day Ceremony through a video that all classes watched on November 10. We were privileged to have two speakers,

Captain Gregory Juurlink and Master Sailor Bassam Mothana prepare video presentations for the school. Many thanks goes to the students who volunteered to MC the event, read poems, and prepare presentations, and everyone for taking the time to remember.

Infinitus Academy

In November, our ANS Student Support Worker, Charmaine Willis, invited our students to participate in an educational opportunity provided by Infinitus Academy with Andreas Robinson. African Nova Scotian students from various junior high schools within HRCE met virtually to engage in discussions with City Councillor candidates about Business and Politics with a focus on Black youth having a voice and owning their value.

This unique opportunity inspired our students to make the connection on how their voice can have a profound impact in the change they want to see; both in their personal lives, their communities and beyond.



Great
Academics and
Treatment of
Others.....
Respectful
School.
GATORS!

Counsellors Corner

St. Agnes has received a Healthy School Communities Grant. The grant project which is called: "Crossing Thresholds" is designed to provide personal growth and development activities for a diverse group of students so they may receive leadership, volunteer and career focused opportunities within our school community. This project is also designed to support youth in building strategies for supporting their mental health. When COVID allows, we plan to introduce students to healthy lifestyle choices which may expand their repertoire recreational activities.

February is registration month. High School course selection will be a multi-step process. Families will be asked to help their child review and complete a paper copy of their course selections. The students will then have an individual meeting with the school counsellor where they will officially request courses using the on-line process. Typically, Citadel High offers information sessions for parents and students throughout this process. We will notify you when we receive information on these sessions and how the information will be accessed this year.

February is African Heritage Month in Nova Scotia (Celebrating it's 37th year!). The theme this year is: Black History Matters: Listen, Learn, Share, Act. Last year a group of African Nova Scotian students participated in a photo project which we would like to build-on this year with the help of a School Counselling Grant which was secured for this purpose.

Our African Nova Scotian support worker, Charmaine Willis and our school counsellor, Rosemary Manning-Ryan, are collaborating to support students who are interested in applying for the following opportunity: **J-School Noire** is a 2-day workshop designed for **Black Youth** who are interested in learning more about journalism and media. This year's workshop is taking place during Black History Month and is completely virtual. J-School Noire offers Black high school and junior high school students the chance to learn from top media professionals and build their storytelling skills. The program will provide students an opportunity to dive into the skills of podcasting, interviewing, writing, hands-on shooting, editing, and more. Application deadline is **January 15, 2021**. _

Silent Auction

Our Parent-Teacher Association recently held an online silent auction aimed at enhancing learner related technology at St. Agnes.

We would like to thank all individuals and organizations that have made this fundraiser possible with very generous contributions as well as our group of dedicated volunteers for organizing this event.

As always, we appreciate your on-going support for our students and school.

Stand Up Against Bullying Day

St. Agnes virtually celebrated Stand Up Against Bullying Day on **September 13**. This year, Pink Shirt Day encouraged schools to combat **cyberbullying** by thinking twice before posting something negative, and instead using the internet to spread kindness - because we know that Nice Needs No Filter!

St. Agnes students and staff will demonstrate their commitment to building a healthy, safe and positive school environment through art work, social media and by taking the Pink Shirt Day Pledge.



Bell Schedule

- 8:40 am.** – Student Arrival Time
- 8:50 am.** – First Class Begins
- 11:50 am.** – Dismissal for Lunch
- 1:15 pm.** – Student Arrival Time
- 1:20 pm.** – First Class Begins
- 3:20 pm.** – Dismissal for the Day

Remote Learning Resources

The Technology Integration Lead Team has put together some one page documents, graphics, and short videos to aid families in navigating some of the digital resources that are often used in classrooms. These are resources that may also be used in an at-home-learning scenario. Some of the documents include *How to sign into your Chromebook and Google Classroom*, *Online Class Norms*, *How to sign into SeeSaw on the Web and on the App*, and more. You can access these documents in the folder found [HERE](#). If you wish to share these documents with parents/guardians, please make a copy and share that copy (GNSPES ID is needed to view the folder, so families cannot view the original).

Additionally, TILT has created a short video to demonstrate the process of a student logging in and accessing assignments and materials on **Google Classroom**. Because parents do not have access to a GNSPES account, they are unable to be added to our Google Classrooms. In the situation where a parent asks for access, we recommend that they sit with their child and have their child walk them through the classroom. To help with this, we have created a video that can be shared with students and parents [here](#).

For more information or for support, please contact tilt@hrce.ca.

Student Council

The St. Agnes Student Council is up and running! Each homeroom class has elected a representative to attend council meetings every second Friday at lunch.

The Council organized a Halloween Costume Contest and a Remembrance Day poetry contest with Shyann Shute taking 1st place. Council members have been reading the daily announcements.

The Council will be hosting Winter Days from December 14-18. Activities include: Ugly Sweater Day, Meme & PJ Day, Twin Day, and Red & Green Day. As well, a classroom decorating contest with homeroom 701, 802 & 901 winning the top prize.

A Food Drive for FEED NS has been running since Monday, December 7 and will continue until Friday, December 18. Students are encouraged to bring non-perishable food items to contribute to their class collection box.

School/Bus Cancellations and Delayed Openings

The Halifax Regional Centre for Education takes great care when making the decision to cancel schools and/or buses, or delay the opening of school, in the event of severe or inclement weather. When these situations occur, the information is posted on the HRCE's website at www.hrce.ca, on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/HRCE_NS](https://twitter.com/HRCE_NS), recorded at 902-464-INFO (4636) and communicated to all local radio stations. Families can also subscribe to receive notice of cancellations and delayed openings by e-mail or text message by following the link on the front page (left side) of the HRCE website.

If weather conditions warrant, the HRCE could implement a delayed opening. Delayed openings would be considered when a severe weather event has concluded but snow clearing or other operations require additional time. Delayed opening may also be considered when the physical plant is experiencing an issue such as a power outage or loss of water and additional time is required to prepare the school to open. If this were to occur, school would be delayed by two hours. If Stock Transportation is operating, the expectation will be that students are picked up two hours later than their regularly assigned time pending any weather-related delays. Our lunch and dismissal times will remain at their regularly scheduled times.

To learn more about the process on how decisions regarding closures and cancellations are made, visit: <https://www.hrce.ca/about-ourschools/parents/inclement-weather>.



STUDENT RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

1. I have the **RIGHT** to learn in this school.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to be prepared to learn.
2. I have a **RIGHT** to hear and be heard.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to respect other's contributions.
3. I have a **RIGHT** to be respected in this school.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to be considerate to other people.
4. I have a **RIGHT** to be safe in this school.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** not to threaten, and/or physically or psychologically harm anyone else at school or while going to and from school.
5. I have a **RIGHT** to privacy and to my own personal space.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to respect the personal property of others and to accept their right to privacy.
6. I have the **RIGHT** to be treated with courtesy and respect by adults.
It is my **RESPONSIBILITY** to show respect and to treat courteously all adults in our school and the community.
7. I have the right to be knowledgeable about and proud of my ancestry and cultural heritage.
I have the **RESPONSIBILITY** to learn about and to be tolerant of the history and cultural background of others.