

Welcome to School!

This information will help you and your children understand the school system in Nova Scotia. Schools in Nova Scotia work with parents to help their children to succeed, so you can always contact your school for additional information.

Parents can find information about school from

- the school handbook
- the school website
- the teacher
- the principal
- the guidance counsellor



Registration

You can register your children at your local school. To register in the Nova Scotia school system, children must be 5 years old by December 31. Students must be under 21 years old to register for high school. You should take citizenship documents and any information that may be useful from your childrens' previous schools.

Contact Information

You must give the school your contact information so that the school will be able to reach you or an emergency contact person. This would include your address, your phone number, and the name of an emergency contact person who may be a relative, neighbour, or friend.

You also should have the telephone number for your children's school, and know the name of your children's teachers. You can check the school website for additional contact information. Contact information for Nova Scotia schools and school boards can be found at www.ednet.ns.ca/contact/schools.shtml.

The School Year and Schedule

The school year begins in early September and ends in late June. There are breaks in December and March, as well as days off for holidays and teacher professional development. Each school has a newsletter or calendar with important school dates and events. Public schools are closed in July and August for summer vacation.

Every school has its own daily schedule that tells the time school starts and ends.

School Attendance

Students are expected to be on time and at school every school day except if they are sick or have a doctor's appointment. If your child becomes sick or has an accident while at school, school staff will call you or the emergency contact person.

Some schools have a "safe arrival program" with a direct number that you **must** call if your child will be absent or late. Please call before school starts and say:

This is (your name). My child (child's name) will not be in school today. My child is in grade (number). The teacher's name is (teacher's name).

Medical Concerns

If your child has medical concerns you need to let the teacher or school staff know so they can support your child's needs.

Counselling and School Health Services

Many schools provide counselling services and other supports based on the needs of students. Check with your school for more information on programs and services available.

Allergies

Check with your school to see if certain foods or scented products are not permitted due to allergies.

Breakfast Program

Some schools have free breakfast programs that provide nutritious food. Check with your school to see if it has a breakfast program. Every child is welcome to participate in this program.

Lunch

All children in Nova Scotia can stay at school for lunch. In schools where there is no cafeteria from which to buy a lunch, children are expected to bring their own. After lunch, elementary students may go outside to play until the afternoon classes begin.

School Closures

Sometimes due to bad weather, or other unexpected events, school may be closed and/or bus transportation may be cancelled. When there is bad weather, listen to the radio that morning or check the school board website for announcements of schools that are closed.

When you enroll your child in school you will complete a form indicating where your child will go if school is cancelled in the middle of the day. You or your emergency contact will receive a call to let you know that school has been cancelled.

Supervision

Students are supervised for 20 minutes before school begins in the morning. You cannot leave young children in the schoolyard when there is no school staff present. If your child stays at school for lunch, the school will supervise your child.

Dressing for Weather

All students are expected to dress for the weather and season, wearing warm clothing such as hats, mitts, boots, and coats. Elementary students (grades primary to grade 6) may play outside at recess and during lunch break, except when it is raining or too cold.



School Bus Transportation

School bus transportation may be available. Check with the school office for more information.

Community Connections

Your school may be able to provide you with information about community programs available in your area, such as sports and recreation, before- and after-school programs, March break, and summer camps. Check with your school to find out how they can help connect you with your community.

Welcome to Nova Scotia!

