École John W. MacLeod Fleming Tower School

September 2026 News

PRINCIPAL's MESSAGE:

Welcome to the 2026-2027 school year. My name is Tracy Marchand and I am so happy and excited to be returning to the JWMFT family this year. This is my 5th year at JWMFT and I am very much looking forward to the wonderful year ahead and feel very privileged to be Principal of this amazing school. Please know that my door is always open so do not hesitate to contact me for any reason.

The start of a school year is a very exciting time for everyone, especially for our new students and their families. We look forward to working with you as partners to ensure all students are successful. We encourage open communication between home and school at all times and hope you'll find opportunities to volunteer.

Our monthly newsletter and calendar will be available during the first week of every month. We look forward to seeing you all shortly.

Have a wonderful year!

Tracy Marchand

The staff of John W MacLeod Fleming Tower for 2025-26:

JWM Preprimary: S. MacEachen (ECE Lead), M. Buckley (ECE Support), P. Manku (ECE Support)
JWM Preprimary: Q. Ojiemudia (ECE Lead), K. King (ECE Support)
FT Primary FI: M. Henley
FT Primary FI: G. Rice
FT Primary English: H. Davies
JWM Grade One FI: B Carroll
JWM Grade One FI: K. Wadden
JWM Grade One/ Two English: L. Dompierre
JWM Grade Two FI: M. Zimmermann
JWM Grade Two/Three English: M. MacLeod
JWM Grade Two/Three FI: O. Burke
JWM Grade Three FI: L. Bell
JWM Grade Three/Four English: O. Devine
JWM Grade Four FI: C. Power



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Reminders:

September 3
Curriculum Night

September 4
Students back to school

September 11
Stand Up Against Bullying Day

September 30
Truth and Reconciliation Observance - No school for students/staff

October 1
Treaty Day

October 2 & 3
Picture Day

Principal –
Tracy Marchand

Vice Principal: Denise Jarvis
(Acting VP: Christine Richey)

Administrative Assistant – Kim Ritcey

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JWM Grade Four FI: M. Potter
JWM Grade Four/Five English: T. George
JWM Grade Four/Five English: E. Thompson
JWM Grade Four/Five French: TBA (E. Boudreau)
JWM Grade Five FI: E. Rockwood

Learning Center: K. Kelly; J. Steeves
Resource English & Marking and Prep: D. Ratchford
Resource FI: A. Arora
Early Literacy Support FI: S. Lent
Early Literacy Support English: C. Locke
Elementary Music: P. Burton; K. Cooke
JWM Core French: S. Abed
Phys. Ed: M. Royale; S. Quigley
Librarian: C. Hirtle
EPA: D. Lange
EPA: N. Johnson
EPA: S. Allen
EPA: N. Wilson-Hagens
EPA: A. Glazebrook
African Nova Scotia Student Support: A. Beals
JWM Lead Excel: A. Clayton
FT Lead Excel: S. Boutillier
Administrative Assistant: K. Ritcey
School Counsellor: L. Wall
Caretaker: M. Goris, (JWM) & W. Higgins (FT)
Principal: T. Marchand
Acting Vice Principal: C. Richey
Community Outreach Worker (School's Plus): S. Shahid
School Psychologist: K. Hayre
Speech Language Pathologist: S. MacDonald
English as a Second Language: J. Landrigan
School Social Work: Sarah Cowans

We remind parents/guardians that the staffing process does not end until September 30, 2026. Enrolment figures are reviewed in September by Central Office School Administration. During the month of September, please keep in mind that changes are indeed possible. We will keep you informed and up to date in a timely manner should that become the case.



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Attendance Policy:
As you are aware, regular attendance at school, which includes arriving on time (in the mornings and after lunch), supports greater student success and achievement. Attendance supports student learning and promotes a sense of responsibility that students will need as they transition from the school system to post-secondary studies and/or the workforce. Promoting and supporting regular student attendance and getting to school on time are a shared responsibility. All partners, including students, parents/guardians, teachers, principals, Regional Centers, and community partners must work together. As per the Education Act, students are required to attend school regularly and punctually. All students are expected to be present and prepared for the beginning of class. Schools will develop and implement consistent, school-wide practices for responding to late arrivals and absenteeism, including meeting with parents/guardians and students, if applicable, to help find supportive solutions to engagement concerns.

Safe-Arrival:
If your child is unable to attend school for any reason, please call the safe arrival line at 1-833-582-6940. If your child arrives after the bell, they should check in at the office so we can avoid unnecessary calls.

Dismissal time for all students is 2:35 p.m:
After school, we start dismissing our students starting at 2:35 pm. We announce the bus number when it arrives and students give us their bus cards when getting on the bus to ensure they are on the right bus. The bussing process usually completes by 2:55. Please sign up for busplanner to receive notifications of any bussing delays at the end of the day. We anticipate this process will take some time during the first couple of weeks of school but will speed up as we get used to the end of day routine. Teachers will let you know what door your child will be dismissed from if they are a walking student. Please double check that your child is registered on the correct bus as routes and bus numbers change over the summer.

Visitation:
Non-essential visitors, including parents/guardians, will be permitted entry to the building – please ring the bell outside the front door. We would like to ask that you please make an appointment with school staff before coming when possible. If you need to pick your child up early, we ask that you call ahead, and



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we can get them ready and have them meet you at the main entrance door. All entry to the school should be made through the main front doors. All visitors need to both check in and sign-in so the main office knows who is in the building at all times. If you are dropping of a student or an item for your child, please do so via the front office.

Website:
Please check our website frequently for updates and calendar events - https://jwm.hrce.ca

Student Safety:
The security of your children is at the center of our practices and we have a number of measures in place to facilitate their safety:

• **Supervision of students begins at 8:05 am.** Please do not leave children on school grounds unattended before that time as no staff will be outside prior to 8:05 am, and students will not be able to enter the building. Staff will be outside at 8:05 am daily to accept your children as they arrive on school grounds. School entry bell rings at 8:20 and instruction begins at 8:25 am. Students are marked late after 8:25.

• To avoid congestion and to assist your child in establishing routines, please allow your child to enter the school on their own when possible. Let the child know you will be waiting for them outside the designated doors if they are walking students.

• We also ask for your cooperation in **not driving onto the parking lot during instructional hours.** The school driveway is for bus and staff use only. Exceptions apply for students whose mobility is impaired for any length of time. Students frequently go out the front door directly into the parking lot and it is safer for all if vehicles are not present. If you need to pick up your child before the end of the day we ask that you call the office in advance of to make arrangements for them to come outside. Please ensure students have notes indicating a change in routine or pick up when necessary. Thank you for helping maintain a safe environment for the students of JWMFT.

• The doors in our building will be locked shortly after the entrance bell. There is a "buzzing in" system that must be activated by the push of a button outside the front entrance after the morning bell.

• Any person with prior permission to enter the building must gain entry through the building's main door and report to the main office, before proceeding through the building.

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Life-Threatening Allergies & Epi Pens:
HRCE policy states that students who have identified life-threatening allergies must carry their epinephrine auto injectors (epi pen) on their person at all times while at school. We have several students who have life-threatening allergies to **peanuts/nuts** and associated products. We would like to respectfully ask that parents/guardians avoid sending things to school that may contain these products. Additionally, some of our students have medical conditions which can be worsened by scented products. We are also a scent smart school and encourage visitors to avoid wearing strong scents when at school. This includes scented hand sanitizers. Thank you very much for your cooperation!

Outdoor Education:
Students and teachers will be spending some learning time outdoors. It is important that parents help us prepare for this by applying sunscreen to students before coming to school (staff is not able to do so) or teaching students how to apply it themselves. Teachers will be taking students out in all kinds of weather conditions so it would be helpful if students dress for the day assuming time will be spent outdoors.

Medic Alert No Child Without Program:
The No Child Without program offers a free MedicAlert membership to students who attend our school and are between the ages of 4 up to their 14th birthday. If your child has a medical condition, allergy or is required to take medication on a regular basis then you should consider a MedicAlert membership through this program. If your child is already part of the No Child Without program and there have been changes to their medical condition, medications or emergency contact information, call Medic Alert at 1-866-679-3220 Ext. 1 to update your child's file.

Medication:
School staff members are not permitted to administer non-prescription or prescription medications to students without specific consent forms filled out. Medication dosage information and pharmacological documentation must be listed on the forms which parents complete prior to sending any medication to school. This includes medication that students may administer themselves, such as inhaled prescriptions (puffers). Students should not bring over the counter medicines (such as Tylenol) to school to take on their own, as this may accidently pose a risk to others. We are more than happy to safely store such medications with the teacher or in the office, when necessary, once the proper forms have been completed.



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Volunteers:
Any volunteers wishing to assist us with class trips and activities throughout the year will need to have **BOTH a Criminal Records Check WITH Vulnerable Sector and Child Abuse Register** completed. Your checks are good for three years. If interested, please send an email to kritcey@hrce.ca and she will provide you with the letter you need to take to the police community office as well as the online link for the Child Abuse Register check.

Provincial Cell Phone Policy
There is a provincial policy regarding student cell phone use. How does that apply to JWMFT?

All students in grades PP - 5 will turn off and store their cell phones for the entire school day, including non-instructional times. Exceptions may be made to address students' individual needs (medical/ability) when determined in consultation with Student Planning Team, that includes parents/caregivers.

Hot Lunch:
The NS hot lunch program will start on Tuesday, September 8. This program is a "pay what you can" system and any identifying information is not viewable to school personnel. There will be two lunch options offered per day, 5 days a week. Please contact the office if you require assistance in setting up an account.

Breakfast Cart:
Just like in previous years, our breakfast program will start up mid-September. Students will be able to choose from "grab and go" items. We will once again be offering the breakfast program 5 days a week.

Home and School Association:

What is the HSA Committee?
The HSA Committee are a group of parents, caregivers, community members and JWMFT staff who plan fundraisers throughout the school year with the goal of providing enrichment to your child's learning environment.

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Do I have to come to every meeting?
No! :) Our group relies on many different members who provide support in many different ways, such as IT support, hands on support during the preparation of events and assistance during the actual events.

How do I get involved?
Please contact the office or any of the other HSA members you may know to have your email added to our list serve.

School Advisory Council:
The ongoing work of John W MacLeod Fleming Tower administration is supported by the School Advisory Council (SAC). This is a formal, provincially legislated body that meets monthly to discuss school business and advise on policy and practices. Serving on the SAC are representatives from the parent/guardian community, school teaching staff and school support staff. All SAC general meetings are public and you are welcome to attend. More information will be coming regarding filling any vacant positions.

What is Head Lice?
The start of the school year is a great time to talk about Head Lice. Head lice are tiny insects that live on the head. They lay eggs (called nits) close to the scalp. Head lice do not spread disease, and having head lice does not mean that you are not clean. Head lice are very common among children. Scratching the head can be a sign of head lice, but you can have head lice without any itching.

How is Head Lice Spread?
Head lice spread through direct contact among children (head-to-head), or indirectly on items such as hats, combs, hairbrushes, headbands, helmets and toques.

Communication:
Communication between school and home is essential to the success of your child. There are many ways to have communication flowing easily between your home and the school. The newsletters, website, class apps, message bags, agendas, email, voice alert messages, and phone all help to ensure that parents/guardians have the information they need.



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Teachers will be sending home class notices/newsletters/calendar to keep you up to date on specific class activities.

If you wish to make an appointment with a teacher or the administration, please email or call ahead so that we can ensure we will be available. Please allow 48 hours for teachers to get back to you during the school week and after the weekend. If you have any concerns, please let us know so that together we can make sure we stay on top of things as quickly as possible.

Parent/guardian concerns related to classroom issues should be addressed with the teacher. If the issue remains unresolved, it should be directed to the principal. If still unresolved, the parent/guardian should follow the parent concern protocol. Contact information is available through the HRCE website.

Environmentally Friendly Efforts:
Please refer to the school website during the first week of every month to read our monthly newsletters. Newsletters will also be distributed via an email attachment to families. If you would still prefer to receive a hard copy of our newsletter, please call or email the office and let us know and we will be more than happy to send one home to you. Thank you for your support! We will send home a voice message from the school letting you know when the newsletter has been posted.

Bussing:
We always expect (and plan for) the late arrival of busses during the first few weeks of school.

As per HRCE's Student Transportation Policy, there is no obligation to provide transportation to students within the walk zone or out of area students. If students residing in the walk zone were bussed in the past, this would have been done as a courtesy. Some parents might not even be aware that they live within the walk zone of the school. It is recommended that parents determine their distance from the school, and if necessary be prepared to apply online for bussing requests. The routing tool: Bus planner, allows you to go online and do just that (https://hrce.mybusplanner.ca). Students who need to be routed to another residence for after school care will also need to apply as well. A student manifest exists detailing who is assigned to the bus route. Notes for alternate after-school transportation arrangements are not accepted (example: birthday parties, sleep-



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overs, play dates, etc.). We do recognize that unforeseen situations with families occur and we will work with you to help solve these as best we can.

Please check the bus planner tool to check on:
- Transportation eligibility
- Route changes, delays
- Track busses
- Request seating

Parents/guardians, please ensure current student addresses (home) and alternate addresses are updated including all contact information. Student (registration) verification forms (demographics) will be delivered electronically starting this week. Please review to ensure the information is correct. The school also uses a school messaging phone system that allows us to communicate important information. You can manage your own preferences of contact by either calling the office or setting up a parent/guardian portal account on Power School. Setting up an account allows you to view your child's information, schedule, report cards and attendance records. It is very important that you have an accurate account because this is the way most school related things are communicated including receiving report cards.

Contact Information:
HRCE Transportation Team: transportation@hrce.ca
902-431-4723

Changes in Student's routine:
If you have changes to make in your child's routine for the day (i.e. early pick up, dismissal changes, bussing information), please send a note to the teacher in the morning explaining the change of routine. The office frequently gets multiple requests during the day to pass along messages and we cannot always guarantee these get delivered on time. We thank you in advance.

PROVINCIAL SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT
The School Code of Conduct establishes standards of behaviour for all Nova Scotia public schools and sets expectations around response to unacceptable behaviours. The Code of Conduct was updated in 2025.

Student behaviour tracking and information:



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Schools record and track unacceptable behaviors, including violence, in accordance with the *Code of Conduct*. This data informs decisions by schools, regions and the province, including investigating and responding to incidents, directing resources and providing supports.

Learn more:

- **Provincial Code of Conduct Policy**
- **Information for parents and caregivers**

In the Spring, JWMFT staff worked together to create our school's vision statement as well as a behaviour expectation matrix. Next week, we will be sending this home to you for your review and to engage in discussion with your child. Staff here have already started the introduction with students and have been practicing expected behaviours in all applicable areas of the building. The update of the code of conduct ensures that all members of school communities, administrators, teachers, families and students, understand expectations and know there are consequences for actions that disrupt learning and plans in place for students requiring extra support managing behaviours.

Dogs on School Property:
Thanks to all who have been so careful with dogs near and around our school grounds. While we understand the joy and companionship that pets bring to our lives, as a school we must continue to prioritize the safety and well-being of all students and staff members. Bringing dogs onto school property poses several potential risks:

1. Allergies: Some students and staff members may have allergies to pet dander, which can cause discomfort and health issues.
2. Fear and Anxiety: Some students and staff do have a fear of dogs, which can lead to anxiety and stress in their presence.
3. Safety Concerns: While most dogs are friendly and well-behaved, there is always a risk of an incident occurring, especially in a crowded environment like a school. We have no way to monitor any individual dog's training or behaviour and even the tamest pet may react unexpectedly when surrounded by curious children or when inadvertently startled.
4. Although most owners pick up after their dog, we often find dog waste on school property in areas where children play.

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For these reasons, we kindly ask that you do not bring dogs onto school property. Perhaps saying goodbye on the sidewalk or at the entrance to the back path, would still allow you to walk with your pet to school. We thank you so much for your understanding and cooperation in helping us maintain a comfortable environment for everyone.

Start Up Supplies:
To keep cost low for families, the school purchased some start up materials for students: crayons, markers, colored pencils, sharpies, pencils, white board markers, erasers, scissors, rulers, etc. If teachers run out or need additional items a little later in the year, they may reach out to you as required. Please know that we are here to help in whatever way we can.

Back to School Mindfulness Practices:
Saying goodbye to summer vacation, relaxed schedules and looking ahead to new classrooms might have some of us feeling first day jitters. Students in particular might worry about navigating peer relationships, new routines and a variety of other individual factors. However, having an established mindfulness practice can help with the transition back to school. Mindfulness is being aware of our thoughts and feelings. Practicing mindfulness techniques allows children to shift their emotional state from one of 'fight or flight or freeze' to one of calm and ease.
Breathing

A crucial part of a mindfulness practice is a focus on the breath. Mindful breathing can help children slow down and pause. Here are some breathing techniques to try at home.
•Meditation can be quick yet effective. Before children walk out the door to catch the bus in the morning, allow time to practice a Five Senses Meditation. Take three calming breaths and ask yourself: What do you see? What do you hear? What do you smell? What do you taste and what do you feel? After answering all these questions, take three more deep breaths and return to the present moment.
•Affirmations that children can revisit throughout the day is a great way to practice mindfulness. Consider leaving little notes in your student's backpack or lunchbox with encouraging statements such as "you are so kind" or "you can do hard things."
•Having a gratitude practice helps fill the mind with positive thoughts and boosts moods. It allows us to focus on all the good in our lives rather than the negative. At the end of the day, have everyone in the family share something you are

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grateful for that day. This is a great way for younger children to talk about their day at school. Older kids can even keep a gratitude journal.
These mindfulness practices can be done all year long and with regular use bring about a sense of inner calm, ease and peace.

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