Student and Parent Handbook

Antigonish Education Centre

2026/2027

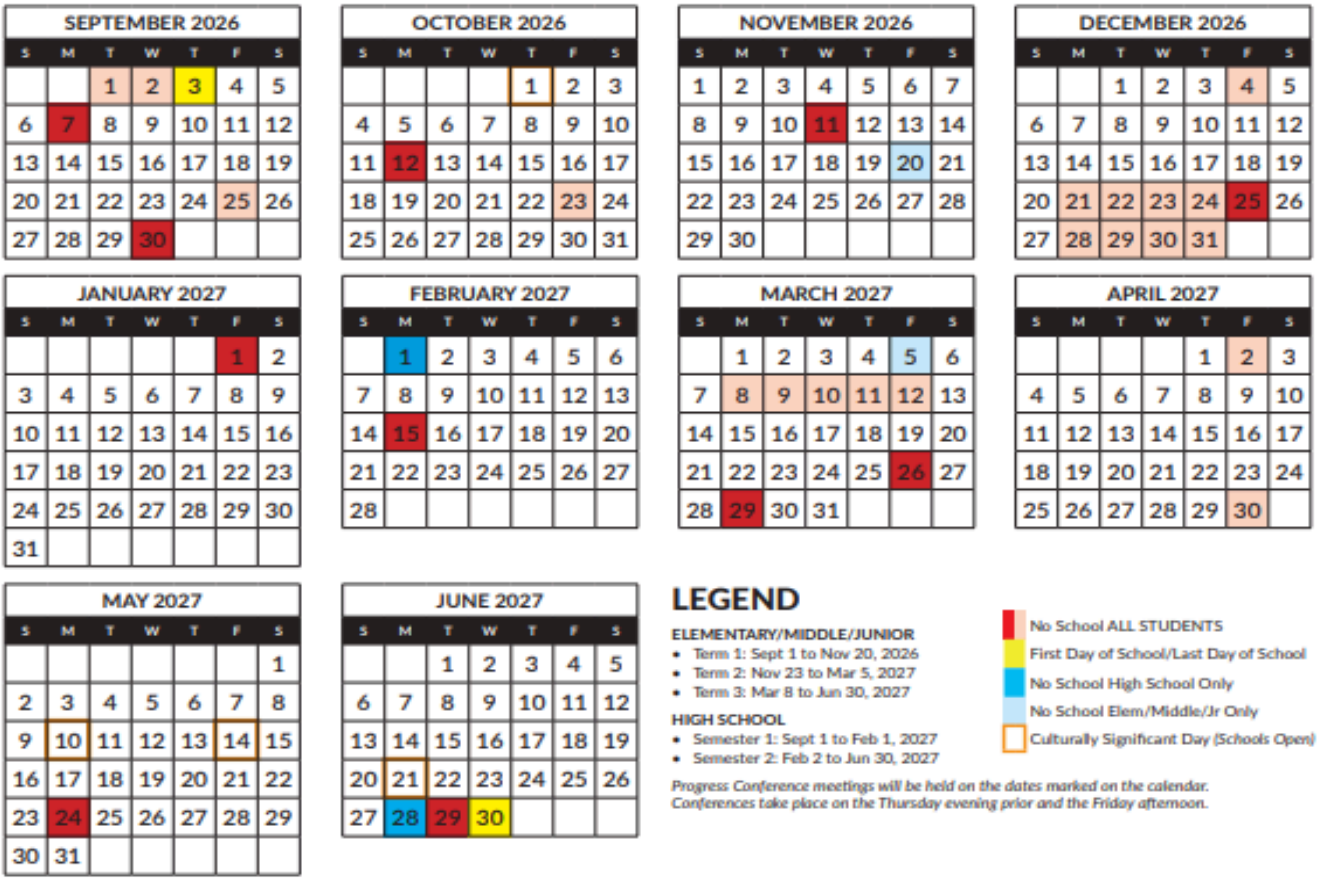
30 Appleseed Drive
Antigonish, Nova Scotia
B2G 3B6
902-867-8800

Mission Statement

To empower our children and youth, within safe, equitable and inclusive environments, to embrace a changing world as responsible, contributing and successful lifelong learners.

Academic Calendar

2026-27 CALENDAR NOVA SCOTIA REGIONAL CENTRES FOR EDUCATION



LEGEND

ELEMENTARY/MIDDLE/JUNIOR

- Term 1: Sept 1 to Nov 20, 2026
- Term 2: Nov 23 to Mar 5, 2027
- Term 3: Mar 8 to Jun 30, 2027

HIGH SCHOOL

- Semester 1: Sept 1 to Feb 1, 2027
- Semester 2: Feb 2 to Jun 30, 2027

No School ALL STUDENTS
First Day of School/Last Day of School
No School High School Only
No School Elem/Middle/Jr Only
Culturally Significant Day (Schools Open)

Progress Conference meetings will be held on the dates marked on the calendar. Conferences take place on the Thursday evening prior and the Friday afternoon.

Sept 1	School Organization Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Sept 2	Professional Development Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Sept 3	**First Day of School for Students**
Sept 7	***Labour Day* (No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Sept 25	Professional Development Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Sept 30	National Day for Truth & Reconciliation **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Oct 1	Treaty Day *(Culturally Significant Day Schools OPEN)*
Oct 12	Thanksgiving Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Oct 23	NSTU Conference Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Nov 4	Take Your Kid to Work Day
Nov 11	Remembrance Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Nov 16-19	Report Cards High School
Nov 20	Elem/Middle/Jr. Assessment & Evaluation Day **(No Classes ELEM/MIDDLE/JR ONLY)**
	Term 1 Ends (Elem/Middle/Jr)
Nov 23-30	Report Cards Elem/Middle/Jr

Dec 4	Progress Conferences/Teacher Professional Practice **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Dec 18	**Last Day for Students Before Holiday Break**
Dec 21	Teacher Professional Practice Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Jan 4	**First Day Back After Break**
Jan 26-29	High School Summative Assessments
Feb 1	High School Assessment & Evaluation Day/Semester 1 Ends **(No Classes HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)**
Feb 2	Semester 2 Begins (High School)
Feb 3-12	Semester 1 Report Cards (High School)
Feb 15	Nova Scotia Heritage Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Mar 5	Elem/Middle/Jr Assessment & Evaluation Day **(No Classes ELEM/MIDDLE/JR ONLY)**
	Term 2 Ends (Elementary)
Mar 8-12	Spring Break **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Mar 15-25	Report Cards Elem/Middle/Jr
March 26	Good Friday **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
March 29	Easter Monday **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**

Apr 2	Elem/Middle/Jr Progress Conferences/ Teacher Professional Practice Day & High School Professional Development **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Apr 20-27	Report Cards High School
Apr 30	Elem/Middle/Jr Professional Development & High School Progress Conferences/ Teacher Professional Practice Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
May 10	Mi'kmaw Language Day *(Culturally Significant Day Schools OPEN)*
May 14	Black Excellence Day *(Culturally Significant Day Schools OPEN)*
May 24	Victoria Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Jun 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day *(Culturally Significant Day Schools OPEN)*
Jun 22-25	High School Summative Assessments
Jun 28	High School Assessment & Evaluation Day **(No Classes HIGH SCHOOL ONLY)**
Jun 29	Assessment & Evaluation Day **(No Classes ALL SCHOOLS)**
Jun 30	**Last Day of School**

Annapolis Valley Regional Centre for Education
Cape Breton-Victoria Regional Centre for Education
Chignecto Central Regional Centre for Education
Halifax Regional Centre for Education
South Shore Regional Centre for Education
Strait Regional Centre for Education
Tri-County Regional Centre for Education

Strait
Regional Centre for Education

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 school principal.

3. **For questions about programs and services available from community partners and at school**, and how to access these supports, please contact the SchoolsPlus Parent Navigator, Savannah Antle, by email at savannah.antle@srce.ca or by phone at 902-631-6695.

4. **For questions related to busing, bus stops and/or bus routes,** please contact SRCE Transportation by email at transportation@srce.ca or by phone at 902-747-3645.

   For busing emergencies, please contact SRCE Transportation staff by phone at 902-747-3642 (6:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

5. **For general inquiries,** please contact the SRCE where we will be happy to connect you with the appropriate member of staff: 902-625-2191 / srce@srce.ca.

6. **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.

Staff at AEC

The most recent up to date **staff list** can be found on our website at aec.srce.ca. School administration information is below.

Principal	Joanne Landry	joanne.landry@srce.ca
Vice-Principal	Suzanne Davidson	suzanne.davidson@srce.ca
Vice-Principal	Trevor MacIsaac	trevor.macisaac@srce.ca
Secretaries	Both secretaries receive aec.office@srce.ca Trudi Burns Kelly Connors	aec.office@srce.ca trudi.burns@srce.ca kelly.connors@srce.ca

Meet Ace the Owl!

Ace is our friendly Mascot. He loves to come for visits and see all the "bucket filling". Whenever there's a problem or conflict, Ace encourages everyone to talk it out, listen to each other and find a solution together. Ace loves to see students working together, making friends and creating a positive, caring community. With Ace by our side, we're all learning to be the best we can be and look out for one another!

Meet Kelso the Frog!

Kelso is our friendly problem-solving frog! He helps us remember that when we have a problem, there are different strategies we can try to help make things better. Sometimes we need the help of a caring adult, and sometimes we can use our problem-solving skills to work things out all on our own.

Kelso reminds us to stay calm, use our words, listen to others and think about what we can try. He loves seeing students grow in confidence, make good choices and learn how to work through everyday problems. With Kelso's help, we're learning that problems happen — and we can become great problem solvers!

Restorative School

At AEC, we embrace a restorative approach to education, focusing on creating a positive and inclusive community. We prioritize respectful relationships, understanding, and empathy among students, staff and families. When conflicts arise, we use restorative practices to resolve issues collaboratively, encouraging accountability and personal growth.

We look forward to welcoming our AEC families into our restorative community throughout the year. Your involvement is vital to building an environment where respectful relationships, understanding and empathy thrive!

Head Lice

AEC follows Public Health and Strait Regional Centre for Education recommendations for the prevention and treatment of head lice. Families are encouraged to check their child's hair regularly, keep long hair tied back when possible, and remind children not to share personal items such as hats, brushes, combs, hair accessories, helmets or scarves. If head lice are found, please notify the school and begin the recommended treatment process. Students with live head lice will be sent home for treatment and may return to school after the first treatment. When a confirmed case occurs, families will be notified so they can monitor their children. More detailed information about prevention, treatment and school procedures can be found in the SRCE resource, *Head Lice: An Information Guide for Parents/Guardians and School Communities*.

SRCE Head Lice Information Guide

Public Events

Please note from time to time our school will host public events like sporting events, competitions and concerts. As a public event, it is reasonable to expect photographs and audio/video/digital recordings may be taken by those in attendance. Therefore, privacy cannot be expected. When events are public, it is reasonable to expect photographs and/or taping will be taken by spectators, media and schools.

We understand you may wish to record your child at this event. Please be respectful of other students' and family's privacy when recording your child during the event.

Morning Drop Off

Morning drop-off takes place between 8:00 and 8:30 a.m.

If using the Parent Drop-Off Loop, please pull ahead to the next available drop-off spot so that all spaces are being used and traffic can continue to flow. The loop is intended for children who can exit the vehicle independently.

If your child needs help getting out of the vehicle, or if you need to get out with them, please park in the parking lot and walk your child to the sidewalk.

Thank you for helping us keep morning drop-off safe, smooth and moving!

Students Arriving Late

If you are dropping your child off at school after the morning bell at 8:30am, please ring the doorbell and indicate to the secretary who your child is. Then your child will proceed to class on their own. If they need assistance, our staff will be happy to help.**Students Leaving Early**

Students Leaving Early

If you are picking your child(ren) up before regular dismissal time, parents/guardians are required to ring the doorbell, indicate your name, who you are picking up and proceed to the main office to sign your child(ren) out. The Student Sign Out book is located in the main office. Office personnel will call the student(s) down to meet you in the main office.

End of Day Pickup of Students

End-of-day pickups are at 2:25 PM at the basketball nets near the yellow barriers. Parents/guardians should park their cars, without blocking others, and walk to the basketball nets to meet their child. Supervising teachers will not be able to bring students to meet you beyond the yellow barriers. Arriving on time for your pickup is very important for a smooth end of day.

Safe Arrival/Attendance

If your child is going to be absent or late, please report in the Safe Arrival app or website. There is also an interactive toll free phone number you can use. See below.

If you are picking your child up early or making changes during the day, contact the main office at 902-867-8800.

Classroom teachers will be made aware of student absences. Parents/guardians should not communicate absences to the classroom teacher, unless for FYI purposes. Use Safe Arrival instead.

Parking

Work continues at AEC to improve our parking lot and create a safer, more accessible space for our students, families, staff and visitors. We appreciate everyone's patience and cooperation as these improvements are made.

We ask all families and visitors to help us by using the parking lot safely and respectfully. Please park only in designated spaces, avoid blocking other vehicles or parking areas, and be mindful of traffic flow during our busy arrival and dismissal times.

Accessible parking spaces must remain available for those who need them. Please do not park in an accessible space without the appropriate permit or plate, and avoid blocking these spaces, even briefly, when dropping off or picking up children.

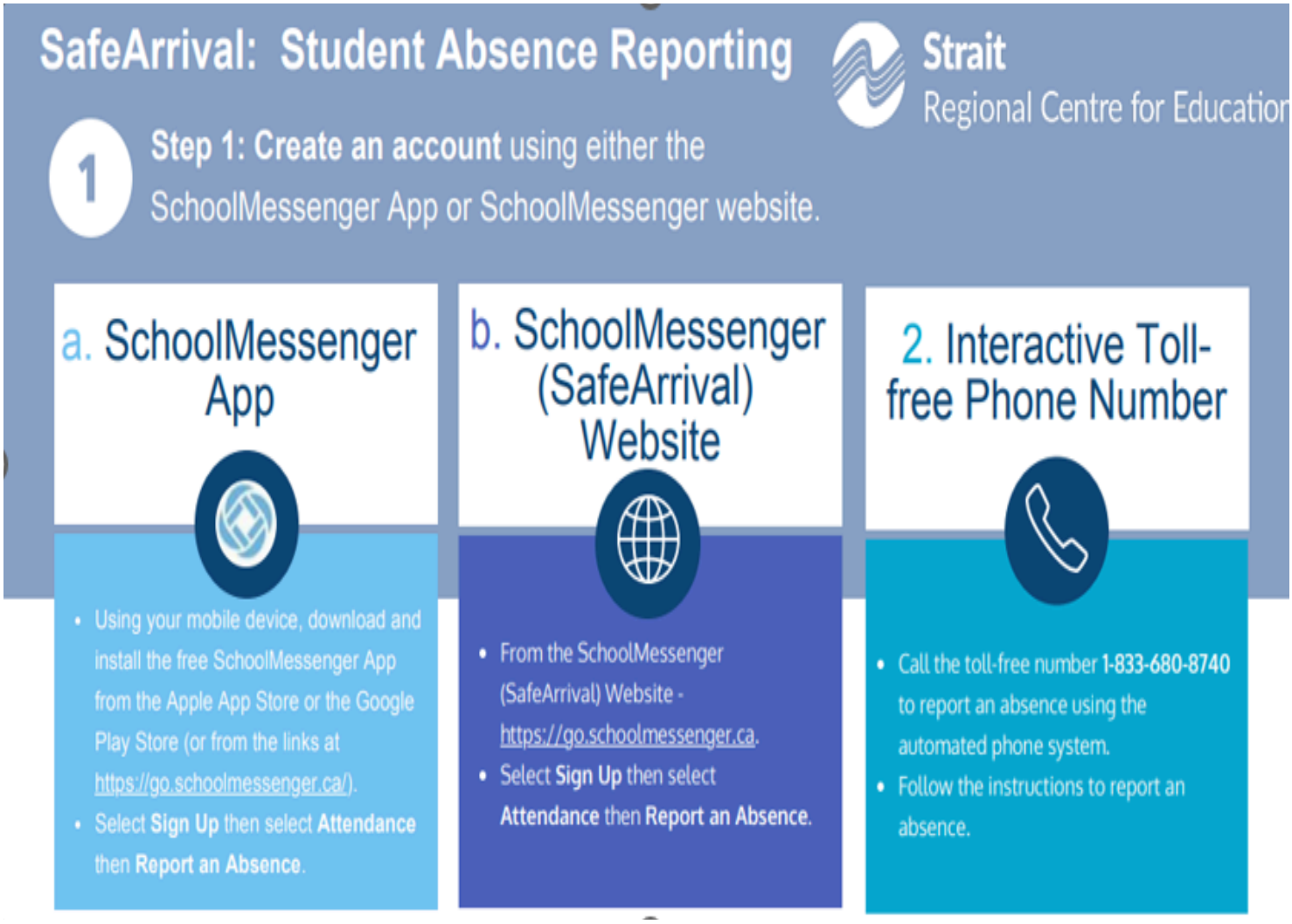
A little patience and consideration go a long way during busy times. Thank you for working with us to keep our parking lot **safe, accessible and welcoming for everyone.**

Safe and Proper Dismissal of Students

At AEC, we are committed to ensuring a smooth and safe dismissal process for all students. Our goal is to help students safely board their assigned bus or meet their parents/guardians at the designated basketball net pick-up location in an organized manner.

If you are going to pick up your child or have your child picked up **during the school day,** a note should be forwarded to your child's teacher (or call the secretary **prior to 2:00pm)** indicating your intentions. This will give the school some direction as to the dismissal of your child as well as provide a record of what took place on that day. Daily schedules can fluctuate from day to day. Therefore it is important that parents/guardians inform classroom teachers of any change to the after school plan. **Same day time changes *MUST* go through the office,most effectively via phone call at 902-867-8800, as there is no guarantee teachers will see emails you send.**

Attendance



Bussing

To travel on an SRCE school bus, your child must be listed on the bus route roster. Bus pass notes will not be issued. Within the AEC catchment area, each student is permitted a regular bus route and upon request, **one** alternate route, which must remain consistent throughout the school year. To request an alternate route, contact SRCE Transportation at transportation@srce.ca or **902-747-3645**. If you have a specific question concerning student travel, please contact the SRCE transportation department.

The Strait Regional Centre for Education expects students to obey the rules and regulations of the Nova Scotia Utility and Review Board governing their behavior and to be aware of the consequences of inappropriate behavior, as provided in the Education Reform (2018) Act and the Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy. Students are required to be familiar with the Instructions to Students which are posted at the front of each bus.

Visitors to AEC

AEC Visitor Procedures are implemented for the safety of all children. Note that unless you are a student or staff at Antigonish Education Centre, you are considered to be a visitor to the school. All Grade primary to four visitors must enter the school using the front doors. Pre Primary visitors use the Pre Primary doors. Upon arriving, please ring the doorbell and someone will be happy to assist you.

All visitors to the building are to report to the office for assistance.
Visitors are not permitted to go down to learning spaces, the gymnasium, outside play area or enter the hallways during any time of the school day, including drop off and pick times unless it is a scheduled activity.

If you are delivering lunch or other items for a student, please ring the doorbell and someone will make sure that your child receives the item or items.

If the parent(s) or guardian(s) need to meet with a teacher, please email the teacher to make an appointment. Meet the Teacher and the two Parent Teacher Conference times are excellent opportunities to connect with your child's teacher and visit their learning space. Appointments can also be made throughout the school year when necessary. Dropping in during the school day will not ensure that you can meet with the teacher.

The cooperation of all parents, guardians, students and staff members is appreciated as we strive to create a safe and conducive learning environment for all. These procedures control unnecessary interruptions in the classroom and maximize teaching time.

Devices

Handheld electronic games, iPads, iPods, or cell phones are not to be taken to AEC.

Trading Cards

Trading cards (pokemon, hockey, baseball, etc…) are not to be taken to AEC.

Birthday Cards

Birthday cards may be brought to school and distributed discreetly. Students are encouraged to speak with their teacher beforehand to ensure the distribution is done respectfully and without causing anyone to feel left out.

Nutrition

Research consistently shows that good nutrition, as outlined by Canada's Food Guide, has a positive impact on children's health and learning. At Antigonish Education Centre, we are committed to following the guidelines set by the Food and Nutrition Policy for Nova Scotia Public Schools.

We offer a range of healthy food options through our breakfast program, as well as snacks and lunches for any student who wants them. For classroom events involving food, we provide the food and kindly ask that students refrain from bringing in items to share.

We are pleased with the success we had this year with our new Nova Scotia Lunch Program that was implemented in October 2024. This new menu has provided even more nutritious choices for our students.

Scent Free Environment

Your cooperation is appreciated in respecting our school's attempts to create a healthy and pleasant environment for students and staff. Perfumes and scented products are not welcome at Antigonish Education Centre.

Non-smoking Policy

The Strait Regional Centre for Education prohibits individuals from smoking tobacco or cannabis and the use of e-cigarettes in and around all school facilities and property, including our playgrounds.

Chartwells

Chartwells is our food service provider. The lunch menu is available at nslunch.ca. The ordering cycle opens every 2nd Friday and closes the following Wednesday at noon. Watch our school flyers, emails and website for up to date information about ordering and menus. The cafeteria contact number is 902-867-8805. For help creating an account or for any questions go to Frequently Asked Questions | NS School Lunch Program.

Food Allergies

AEC is a Nut Smart school, and nut allergies can be life-threatening. We ask parents and guardians to carefully monitor lunches and snacks to ensure they are free of all nut products. Your vigilance is essential and greatly appreciated.

Preventing allergic reactions is key to keeping our school safe. We are also committed to working closely with families to address individual allergens and student needs, ensuring a safe environment for everyone. Additionally, information about peer allergies will be shared with the school community to help others contribute to keeping each other safe.

We encourage you to educate your child on the following important practices:

- Wash hands before and after eating.
- Rinse mouths with water after meals.
- Avoid sharing food, drinks, or utensils with classmates.
- Help clean their eating area after meals and snacks.
- Never play tricks or dare friends with allergies to try foods.
- Get help immediately if a friend with an allergy feels unwell.

Reading food labels and identifying allergen ingredients is crucial. If you're unsure about a product, choose an alternative. For more information on common allergen names on food labels, please refer to Health Canada Fact Sheets at: Health Canada. You can also visit the Anaphylaxis Canada website at www.anaphylaxis.ca.

Creating and maintaining an allergy-aware school requires effort from everyone. We thank you for your cooperation and support as we work together to make Antigonish Education Centre a safe, healthy, and welcoming learning environment for all students, staff, and families.

Footwear

Students should have a pair of indoor sneakers at school to help keep classrooms clean and allow safe participation in physical education classes in the gym. If your child needs a pair of shoes, we can help. Please contact the school.

Lost and Found

We are always concerned with the number of students' articles, such as clothing, shoes, water bottles and lunch boxes that remain at the school each year. The following steps will help reduce this problem:

- ☐ **Please mark all belongings with your child's first and last name.**
- ☐ Emphasize with your children that it is their responsibility to LOOK AFTER their belongings.

- ☐ There is a “Lost and Found” area in the school cafeteria. Don’t forget to check this area when you visit the school.

Please watch our FaceBook page regularly as we will post items in our Lost and Found regularly. **Any unclaimed articles will be donated to a charity at the end of each term.**

Prepared for the Weather

In Nova Scotia, we can experience extreme temperatures during the school year. In the Fall and Spring, heat waves and/or high temperatures may occur. We do our best to keep students cool. However, parents/guardians are asked to send students to school with a water bottle and hat during these seasons. If you would like to use sunscreen for your child, please apply on the child before leaving for school. If sending sunscreen to school, please ensure they have practiced putting it on themselves independently as they must do so in school. Also, spray bottles and cans of sunscreen are not permitted; lotions or sticks only.

In Nova Scotia, if it isn’t a heat wave it can often be very cold or even freezing temperatures. Proper seasonal clothing is essential since, in addition to daily outdoor play, we promote outdoor learning opportunities. Appropriate clothing includes hats, mitts, snow pants and winter boots. If at any time providing appropriate clothing is difficult, please contact school administration for assistance.

Medication

Any medication that is brought to school must be done so in accordance with SRCE Policy IVB2 Medication and Procedures IVB2-Administration of Medication. Students are not permitted to bring medications to the school or for staff to administer medication without the proper completed forms. We ask parents and guardians to contact the office to communicate any student medical needs. Office staff and administration will assist with this process.

Sick or Hurt Children at School

Minor ailments and accidents can usually be handled at school by staff.

1. When necessary, parent(s)/guardian(s) will be contacted, and the situations explained to them. Parent(s)/guardian(s) or an emergency contact may need to come to the school to take the injured student home or to the family doctor, etc. depending upon the circumstances.
2. When parent(s)/guardian(s) or emergency contacts cannot be reached, and the injury or illness requires immediate medical attention, the child will be transported to St. Martha’s Regional Hospital (by ambulance, if necessary). This cost would be the responsibility of the parent(s)/guardian(s). If known, the family physician will also be contacted.
3. Parents and Guardians will be called to pick up students who are unwell.

Parent Concern Protocol

The Strait Regional Centre for Education recognizes and supports the right of parents/guardians to advocate on behalf of their children within the public school system. The Strait Regional Centre for Education endorses the resolution of parent/guardian concerns in a respectful and efficient manner at the school and Regional Centre levels. The purpose of this policy is to provide a progressive mediation process and framework for addressing unresolved parent/guardian concerns related to their child/children's school program and/or to the enforcement of the Provincial School Code of Conduct Policy, with a focus on student-centered solutions. Please see the parent concern protocol linked here or on the srce website. If you have a concern please do not hesitate to speak to your child's teacher or our administration team here at AEC.

Bucket Filling School

Antigonish Education Centre incorporates the "Bucket-filling" philosophy and PATHS (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies) program into our curriculum and regular school life. These programs foster positive emotional responses; develop skills for resolving conflicts; teach students to communicate accurately and listen sensitively; teach students to respect and accept people's differences; and teach meaning of cooperation and working together in trust. We utilize a monthly system of rewards for doing good deeds at school.

Here is a link to Have You Filled a Bucket Lately?

Schedule

AEC operates on an eight day cycle. If school is canceled, that day in the cycle will not be repeated. A calendar will be sent home indicating the days of the cycle. News, calendar events and the bell schedule can be accessed on our school website at aec.srce.ca and on the next page.

Bell Schedule

AEC will have two outdoor lunch periods followed by eating time in class. Time spent eating in class is flexible based on the needs of the class.

8:30	Homeroom Bell (Students come in from playing outside and/or the breakfast program to get ready for their day)
10:00-10:15	1st Recess
10:15-10:30	2nd Recess
12:00-12:30	1st Lunch Grades 2-4
12:30-1:00	2nd Lunch Grades P-2
2:25	Dismissal for PickUps (Parents/Guardians meet children at the basketball nets)
2:30	Dismissal for walkers and first trip bus students