



# École LeMarchant-St. Thomas School

## Les nouvelles de janvier 2026 January 2026 News Theme: Empathy

Happy New Year! Bonne Année!



### 2025 Round-Up

It was an excellent finish to the 2025 year at LMST! Our ***Shopping Under the Stars*** event was a great success. We raised \$3437! The money raised will go toward our Grade 6 year end trip and ceremony. Thank you for all the donations and for Ms. LeBlanc for organizing the event. As we look ahead, some students in grades 4,5 and 6 are busy preparing for the musical performance of *Annie JR.* in April. This year we will once again be having two evening performances. Mark your calendars for our April 22 and 23 shows. All students in 4-6 should start thinking about a topic for their Heritage Fair project in April. More info to come about these events.

### Code of Conduct & Matrix of Expectations

In Spring 2025, the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development released an updated [Code of Conduct](#) as part of the provincial Safe Schools Strategy. As part of this initiative, all schools are developing a school-wide Matrix of Expectations to clearly outline positive and respectful behaviours.

During the month of January, Mme Cavanaugh and Mme Gallivan will be visiting classrooms beginning with upper elementary to review the Code of Conduct in child-friendly language and introduce the Matrix of Expectations. A copy of the Matrix will be stapled into your child's agenda.

We encourage families to take time to review the Matrix together and discuss how these expectations support a safe, inclusive, and respectful school community.  
Thank you for your continued support.

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## Battle of the Books

Mme Englehutt, Mme Lacroix and Mme Zelios, Mrs. Michelin, would like to say thank you to all students who participated in the Battle of the Books Club over the last few months.

Congratulations to the following students who have earned a place on

LMST's Battle of the Books team this year.

- Clara, Elle, Ameya -grade 5
- Eva, Ching - grade 6

Competitions against other schools will begin in February.



## Power Outage Information for Families

As we move into the winter months, we want to share how decisions are made when a school experiences a power outage.

Our priority is always to keep schools open safely when possible. A power outage does not automatically mean classes are cancelled – even if it happens during the school day. The decision depends on when power is expected to be restored.

## Here's what happens:

- When a school loses power, HRCE's Operations Team contacts Nova Scotia Power to gather available details on the cause and an estimated restoration time.
- Once we have this information, we consider:
- **Before school starts:** Have buses begun their routes? If so, we wait until students arrive before making a decision. If classes are cancelled, elementary families will be contacted before dismissal.

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- **During the school day:** How close is dismissal? What is the temperature in the building? Does the school rely on power for water or septic systems? These factors, among others, help us decide whether to stay open or close. Often, power returns faster than we could safely send students home.

## If classes are cancelled:

- HRCE will notify families by email and text.
- Families of elementary students will also receive a phone call before dismissal.

Deciding to close schools during a power outage is never simple, but safety is always our top priority. We understand that cancellations can be inconvenient, and our goal is to keep students learning in class whenever possible.

More information about school cancellations for any reason can be found [here](#).

**Learn about the Influenza vaccine**

**FAST FACTS ABOUT THE FLU VACCINE**

- Influenza (the flu) is virus that peaks in transmission in the fall and winter months.
- Most people are mildly ill when they contract the flu but sometimes the flu can be serious and require admission to the hospital.
- Children under 6 years are at the highest risk of serious complications from the flu.
- The flu and RSV can occur at the same time making children more at risk of needing hospitalization.
- The flu vaccine is recommended yearly for children 6 months and older to protect against serious complications of the flu.

**FLU VACCINE SAFETY**

- The flu vaccine cannot cause the flu.
- Serious side effects are rare, affecting less than 1 in 1000 people.
- Common side effects include pain and swelling at the injection site.

**HOW TO BOOK YOUR VACCINE**

- In Nova Scotia, flu vaccines can be booked online and are free of cost.
- You can also call to book at 1-833-792-1772. If you or your child does not have a health card, please call rather than booking online.

Scan to book

**Dalhousie University**  
Faculty of Medicine

## Learn About the Influenza Vaccine

Sharing this information on behalf of the Nova Scotia Department of Health and Wellness.

### Fast Facts about the Flu Vaccine

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## APPS EVERY PARENT SHOULD BE AWARE OF



**SNAPCHAT**

- Disappearing messages
- Snap-into location sharing
- Addictive features (streaks)
- Scoring & adult content



**INSTAGRAM**

- Body-image pressure
- Harassment (stalking)
- Terms use secret "Friends"
- Exposure to adult content



**ROBLOX**

- Inappropriate games
- Unmoderated chat servers
- Chat with strangers
- Pressure to buy Robux



**TIKTOK**

- High to addictive feed
- Harassment and threats
- Attention fragmentation
- Frequent adult content



**DISCORD**

- High grooming risk
- Adult/NSFW content
- Harassment & cyberbullying
- Unmoderated servers



**YOUTUBE**

- Inappropriate content
- High risk of grooming
- Addictive "on" term content
- Attention fragmentation



**CHARACTER AI**

- Sexualized roleplay bots
- High grooming risk
- Harassment & cyberbullying
- Encourages secrecy from parents



**TELEGRAM**

- Encrypted hidden content
- Large, risky group chats
- Minimal moderation
- Hard for parents to monitor



**REDDIT**

- Unfiltered communities
- Adult/sexual content
- Harassment & cyberbullying
- Anonymous users & moderators



**CHATGPT**

- Kids may overshare personal info
- Multiple themes can appear
- Emotional dependence on AI
- Hard for parents to monitor use

Before you let your child use a platform, create an account using their age and explore it yourself to see the content and interactions they'll be exposed to.

## Online Platform Risks From Unplugged Canada

### Sharing on behalf of Unplugged Canada

Many digital platforms today, including social media, online gaming and AI chat tools, are designed to keep kids scrolling and engaged, often exposing them to addictive features, adult content, and interactions they may not be developmentally ready to handle.

Below is a resource that outlines some of the most common social media, gaming, and AI chat platforms, helping families better understand the risks, start meaningful conversations at home, and consider delaying smartphones and access to these apps until kids are more developmentally ready.

You can access the full resource [here](#).

Unplugged Canada is a parent-led, national movement advocating for healthier childhoods by delaying smartphones and social media until kids are more developmentally ready. Join thousands of Canadian families choosing to delay by taking the Unplugged Canada Pledge at [unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge](https://unpluggedcanada.com/sign-pledge).



## Important Dates

- |                 |   |
|-----------------|---|
| • January 5     | First day of school for students                                  |
| • January 20    | School Advisory Council (SAC) meeting 4:30 pm –All welcome        |
| • January 20    | Home & School Association 6 pm – All welcome                      |
| • January 29 pm | Primary 2026 French Immersion parent/guardian info session – 6:00 |

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