



## Algonquin Ridge Elementary School

191 Golden Meadow Road

Barrie, Ontario, L4N 9R6

Phone (705) 737-4080

Fax (705) 730-5820

<http://alr.scdsb.on.ca>

**Cory McKeown**

Principal

**Karen Moffitt**

Vice-Principal

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### ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS February 2022

#### **Character attribute for the month of February**

**Inclusiveness:** We include everyone in what we do and value their contributions.

#### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Hello Algonquin Ridge Community and welcome to February! Even though we have gotten through some very cold weeks in January, and the worst may be behind us, we still have several weeks of Winter to come so you are reminded of the need to have students come to school prepared to be outside during their nutrition break and prior to the 9:10 bell in the morning. The colder and variable weather has also led to an increase in the number of cars we see before and after school each day. Overall, the Kiss-n-Ride routine has been running smoothly in the mornings and we appreciate your patience and caution as the busiest period only lasts about 10 minutes. To review a detailed message with reminders about the school's expectations for visitors accessing the parking lot/Kiss-n-Ride lane please refer to the September 2021 Newsletter. These important safety rules are meant to ensure the safety of all children and adults at school. We always stress the key messages that your 1<sup>st</sup> and best option should be to walk to school when possible (or park, legally, close to the school and walk at least a portion of the distance) and that drivers need to be extra vigilant and cautious when driving anywhere in the vicinity of the school. It is also important to pull all the way forward in the Kiss-n-Ride lane to allow others to access the lane and to choose to park if you need to do more than simply unload.

A few staffing updates to share involve new staff joining our school and farewells to those moving on to explore new opportunities and challenges. As of this week we are thrilled to have Ms. Moffitt (VP) return full-time. Her long history of care and concern for student safety and her passion for working directly with children and their families to offer support is already evident in her day-to-day work. It is wonderful to have her back with us every day. Her impact has already been noticed as the A TEAM reboot saw over 20 Safety Patroller/Student Helpers signed and trained this week. We also welcome a returning staff member as they join our French teaching team. We are thrilled to have Mme. Matlock, who has worked at Algonquin previously as an EA, join our French team in her first teaching contract role in SCDSB—congratulations. Congratulations as well to Ms. Kinsley who leaves an occasional EA position at our school to join our permanent EA team.

It is with mixed emotions that I share the news of Mrs. Teskey's move to a new school, where the students and staff are fortunate to add such a dedicated and experienced educator to their community. I wanted to take this opportunity to thank Mrs. Teskey for her several years of impactful work here at Algonquin Ridge where she made a big difference in so many lives as a Special Education teacher and as a homeroom teacher in both the Primary and Junior divisions. We wish her all the best at Goodfellow P. S. Her class will receive a separate message welcoming the permanent replacement teacher—Mr. J Heidman who has several years of experience at Algonquin Ridge where he taught in the junior division as a Long-Term Occasional teacher. We are also saying good-bye to Mme. Martin (replaced by Mrs. Matlok) who is moving on to a new school in a full-time role. Although her time with us was brief, we appreciated her willingness and ability to quickly get to know our students, staff, and community. Tottenham P.S. will be happy to have her, and we wish her all the best.

\*Please note that in the event of an "Inclement Weather Day" where school transportation is cancelled, our lunch program day (pasta or subs at the moment) will still run as the majority of our students are able to walk to school. We will attempt to keep the meal and provide it the next day but are unable to guarantee that for a variety of reasons.

Cory McKeown

Principal

Pronouns: He/His/Him

[cmckeown@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:cmckeown@scdsb.on.ca)

## VACCINATION CLINICS

Under the direction of the Ministry of Health and in collaboration with local school boards, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU) will be offering COVID-19 vaccination clinics for children in select elementary school locations. The clinics will operate during school hours for eligible students (Kindergarten to Grade 8) and staff of the host school.

**Parent/guardian consent is required.** Clinic hours will be extended into the evenings for these same individuals, as well as for parents/guardians, families from neighbouring schools and all other eligible community members.

To help determine interest and need for a vaccination clinic in our school, please complete [this form](#) and have your child return the form to the school office. If you have difficulty accessing the form, please contact school office staff.

The SCDSB will work with the SMDHU to determine which schools will host vaccination clinics. Information, including the date, time and location of school-based vaccination clinics will be communicated directly with school families and will be posted on the SCDSB website here: [https://scdsb.on.ca/covid-19/vaccination\\_clinics](https://scdsb.on.ca/covid-19/vaccination_clinics).

## CALENDAR

February 7 – Grade 8 graduation pictures

February 14 – Valentine’s Day

February 18 – Report Cards home

February 21 – Family Day- **school closed**

February 25 – Spirit Day – White Out/Black Out Day

February 28 – Virtual School Council @ 6:30 pm

March 3 – Colts Night – Barrie vs Kingston

March 14 – 18 – March Break – **school closed**

March 17 – St. Patrick’s Day

March 25 – Spirit Day - Random Fan Day

## HOLY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS IN FEBRUARY/ DAYS OF AWARENESS

February 1 – Lunar New Year

February 2 – Imbolc – Wicca

February 5 – Vasant Panchami – Hinduism

February 8 – Nirvana Day – Jainism

February 15 – Buddhism

February 16 – Maitreya Bodhisattva’s Birthday – Buddhism

February 16 – Magha ends – Buddhism

February 21 – Family Day – ON

February 25-March 1 – Ayyam-i-H (Intercalary Days)

## HERITAGE RECOGNITION DAYS

February 2, 2022 – Groundhog Day

February 15, 2022 – National Flag Day

February 17, 2022 – National Random Acts of Kindness Day

February 22, 2022 – I Read Canada Day

February 23, 2022 - Pink Shirt Day

## KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2022 IS OPEN!

Kindergarten is the beginning of a wonderful journey of learning, and we want your child to begin their journey in a SCDSB school! Do you have a child who is turning four in 2022? If so, we invite you to register your child for kindergarten. To register online or for more information visit:

[www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/kindergarten](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/kindergarten).

## SCHOOL COUNCIL

Our next meeting will be on Monday, February 28, 2022, at 6:30 p.m. Any interested parents are welcome to attend and will receive the virtual meeting link, if requested through the school office via email to [acompton@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:acompton@scdsb.on.ca). All previous attendees need not make a request each month as they will be sent the link automatically.

## IS IT TIME FOR YOUR CHILD TO HAVE A DENTAL CHECK-UP? LET US HELP!

The Oral Health Team at the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is now available to provide a variety of dental health services for children and youth aged 0–17 at our various clinic locations. We can provide dental screenings, answer questions, and guide you through the dental options that are available for your child through Healthy Smiles Ontario. If you don't have a dentist, we can provide you with options of dental offices that can help.

This is your personal invitation to contact us to discuss your child's dental needs and to ensure their dental concerns are addressed. For more information, contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit:

Monday to Friday, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. at 705-721-7520 or toll free at 1-877-721-7520, ext. 5867.

## STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOUR AND CONSEQUENCES FOR STUDENT ACTION RELATED TO RACISM, BIAS OR HATE

At the SCDSB, we are committed to maintaining safe, inviting and supportive school environments, and recognize that all students have the right to be safe, and feel safe, in our schools. With this right comes the responsibility to contribute to a positive school climate.

We want you to know that any incident of racism, bias or hate will not be tolerated. Any such incident is treated very seriously with immediate action and consequences in accordance with the requirements of the *Education Act*, and consistent with our values and obligations under the *Ontario Human Rights Code*.

Students who engage in acts of racism, bias or hate will face severe consequences as a result of their actions. Please take a moment to review the [SCDSB Code of Conduct](#) with your child(ren). The Code of Conduct sets clear standards of behaviour and specifies consequences for student actions that do not comply with these standards.

We are dedicated to educating our students and staff about the injustice and impact of systemic racism. We continue to work with students, staff, parents/guardians and community partners to ensure that our schools are the safe places they are intended to be for all students.

## FUNDRAISING WITH BRADFORD GREENHOUSES GARDEN GALLERY

When shopping at Garden Gallery please advise the cashier, prior to inputting the sale that you support Algonquin Ridge and five percent of the value of sales will be issued as a gift card for the purchase of Bradford Greenhouses products for school improvements or special events. A fast and easy way to support the school and to keep our gardens looking great!

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*

## CONSIDERATIONS PRIOR TO TRAVELLING THIS WINTER

Is your family is thinking of travelling this winter? Here are some things to consider before you make the arrangements:

1. Learn about travel advisories related to COVID-19 where you are headed, before leaving - <https://bit.ly/3Czk5I>
2. Be sure you understand how the Quarantine Act applies to travelers arriving back in Canada - <https://bit.ly/3HAIOft>

Students who have travelled outside of Canada must self-isolate for 14 days if they do not qualify for a federal quarantine travel exemption. Your child's ability to return to school after travel outside of Canada will depend on whether or not they are fully vaccinated. If they are fully vaccinated, they may be exempt from federal quarantine. If they are not fully vaccinated, they are not to attend school/childcare for 14 days, even if they traveled with a vaccinated companion. A reminder that all students must complete the [COVID-19 Screening Tool](#) before going to school each day. This includes questions related to travel and guidance for those who have travelled. More information can be found on the Government of Canada website: <https://bit.ly/3ctaLqa>. *Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*

## [UPDATES TO THE SCHOOL SCREENING TOOL FOR THE 2021-22 SCHOOL YEAR - INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL](#)

Recently, the [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#) was updated to reflect the return to school requirements for students who are returning from international travel. Individuals who are unvaccinated and returning from international travel, may not attend school or childcare for 14 days upon their return. For further clarity, while unvaccinated children and those under the age of 12 are exempt from federal quarantine if they travelled with a fully vaccinated companion, they may not attend school or childcare for 14 days upon their return. Individuals with all other quarantine exemptions (e.g., travelling for cross-border custody arrangements, travelling for medical treatment) may continue to attend school or childcare.

## [FLIPGIVE FUNDRAISER](#)

Hello ARES Families, we invite you to join our easy and free school fundraiser - FlipGive! You're doing it already... online shopping for groceries, gas, clothing, meals, coffee, gift cards, gifts, sporting goods, books, home decor, renovations, etc. ARES will earn fundraising money when you shop via FlipGive's website with hundreds of popular brands available. You can also shop in-store and earn by using a linked payment card or with gift cards to be redeemed in-store. How does it work? Brands on FlipGive's site pay FlipGive a commission and then they in-turn share that commission with ARES! Every dollar earned is credited directly to our school's fundraising efforts. It's that simple! SHOP, EARN and DONATE! It's quick and free! Sign up and start shopping today! [flipgive.com](http://flipgive.com) Enter Team Code: SLQPHH If you have any questions, reach out to School Council at [councilchairlr@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:councilchairlr@scdsb.on.ca) Thank you for your participation and supporting the school!

## [MABEL'S LABELS](#)

Mabel's Labels is one of our school's fundraising initiatives. This website features peel and stick clothing labels, bag tags and a variety of safety and household labeling systems. This will be an ongoing, open initiative for our school which means that any time you wish to get labels for your children or household, please consider using Mabel's Labels and help Algonquin Ridge. It could not be easier. Simply go to <http://mabelslabels.com> and click on "Support a Fundraiser". Then "Select your School/Organization", find "Algonquin Ridge (Barrie)" and follow the steps to fulfill your order.

Anyone can support our school, whether their children attend ARES or not, so please pass this on to family and friends as well. The product comes directly to you and the school will receive 20% of the total sales! Thank you so much for your support.



## [SCHOOL PLAYGROUND STRUCTURES ARE CLOSED FOR THE WINTER](#)

Every winter, school playground structures are closed. Students are made aware of this during school hours through announcements and staff reminders during breaks. This may not be well known throughout the community, despite signs indicating that playground structures are a winter hazard and are closed. The Canadian Standards Association regulations make recommendations for the depth of ground cover required to minimize injuries (e.g., sand, pea gravel or wood chips). These surfaces cannot be maintained when the ground freezes. Injuries from falling would be more significant on frozen ground. We strongly recommend that you do not allow your children to play on any structures while the ground is frozen



## PEANUT AND NUT AWARE SCHOOL

Our school strives to be a Nut-Safe School. At Algonquin Ridge, we have several students who have a severe nut allergy. These students cannot be exposed to nuts in ANY form, as this may trigger an anaphylactic reaction that is life threatening and requires immediate medical intervention. Therefore, in the best interests of these students and for any other students who may develop peanut or nut allergies in the future we have banned all peanut/nuts and food containing nuts within the school. These include, but are not limited to:

- Peanut butter sandwiches, dips, or crackers
- Nutella
- Cookies or cakes with nuts
- Granola Bars with nuts
- Chocolate bars containing nuts e.g., Snickers.
- Dried Fruit and nut mixes



Direct contact with the food is not always required to trigger a reaction. For example, if someone in our school eats peanuts and then touches playground equipment it could be contaminated with enough peanut butter to trigger a severe reaction. We also ask that children who have peanut butter for breakfast on school days please wash their hands thoroughly and clean their teeth before coming to school.

As always, our paramount concern is for the safety and well-being for all children in our care. We feel this is the best way to attempt to ensure the safety of students that have severe nut allergies in our school. If your child forgets to comply with this, we will send a reminder home with them and provide an alternative snack. Teachers will also assist students by reinforcing the policy through class discussions.

## SAFETY MEASURES IN SCHOOLS

We want to assure you that the health and well-being of our students and staff remains our top priority. We are in regular contact with our local health authority, the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit (SMDHU), and we continue to take their direction on all matters related to COVID-19. Please visit the COVID-19 Return to School page on the SMDHU website at [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org) for additional information. The following health and safety measures will be implemented in our schools.

### Masking:

- Students from Kindergarten (JK and SK) through Grade 12 will be required to wear masks while indoors.
- Staff will be required to wear masks while indoors.

### Enhanced Health and Safety Protocols:

- Hand sanitizer will be provided in each classroom for student and teacher use.
- Students will receive training on proper hand hygiene including instructions on hand washing and sanitizing.

### Ventilation

- Standalone high efficiency particulate air (HEPA) filter units will be placed in all schools without mechanical ventilation.
- HEPA filter units will be placed in all standalone Kindergarten classrooms.

### Enhanced Cleaning:

- Enhanced cleaning and disinfecting at least twice a day of frequently touched surfaces and shared resources such as doorknobs, light switches, toilets, and faucet handles.
- Buses will be sanitized twice daily with frequent cleaning of high-touch surfaces.

### Physical Distancing:

- Directional arrows and signage will be utilized in schools to support physical distancing measures.
- Schools will have designated entry and exit doors and staggered entry and exit times.
- Acrylic shielding will remain installed in school offices.

### DAILY COVID-19 SELF-ASSESSMENT

All students and staff will be required to complete the daily COVID-19 self-assessment prior to entering SCDSB schools and buildings, using the provincial self-assessment tool. Students or staff with symptoms must stay home from school. To access the COVID-19 self-assessment tool, please visit <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>

### INSTRUCTIONS FOR WHEN CHILDREN BECOME SICK AT SCHOOL

Parents/guardians will be asked to provide multiple contacts who will be available to pick up their child(ren) in the event that they become ill while at school. Children who become ill while at school will not be able to travel on a bus home for the protection of the other riders.

### INCLEMENT WEATHER AND BUS CANCELLATION INFORMATION REMINDER

All information regarding cancelled buses in Simcoe County is posted on the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC)'s bus information website at [www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). Our school is in the **CENTRAL** zone. When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, unless otherwise noted. School staff are expected to plan for such emergencies in order to transition students who are unable to attend due to inclement weather, to their online platforms (Google Classroom and/or SCDSBhub [Brightspace by D2L]) and continue with academic programming. It is always a family decision whether or not it is safe for their child(ren) to leave for school under severe weather conditions.

The Consortium and bus operators try to make the decision to cancel school buses before 6 a.m. and make every effort to post announcements before 7 a.m. Inclement weather cancellations are effective for the whole day and buses cancelled in the morning will not run at the end of the day. You can follow the Consortium on Twitter [@SCSTC SchoolBus](https://twitter.com/SCSTCSchoolBus) for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here: <https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx>. For school bus transportation information, visit the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC)'s website at: [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). Also, remember to bookmark the school bus information page at: [simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) for bus delay and cancellation information on inclement weather days.

### STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are expected to respect the guidelines when dressing for school. Our school is a safe space. We work to be equitable and inclusive and understand that students may choose to express themselves through their clothing choices. Student clothing cannot pose a safety concern or conceal identity. Exceptions are granted to students who wear head coverings or other garments/objects for the purposes of religious observance, medical or sensory needs, or other reasons protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SCDSB dress code is available in the student agenda and online at [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/dress\\_code](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/dress_code). If you have questions about the dress code, you can contact your school principal.

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## JOIN US! A LEARNING SERIES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Mental health and well-being continues to be a key strategic priority within the SCDSB. We are pleased to announce a new three-year partnership with Pine River Institute (PRI). The Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) will provide several multi-part learning series focused on student mental health and well-being to SCDSB families, staff and within the SCDSB's broader school communities.

There are two upcoming webinars in the learning series specifically planned for parents and guardians during this school year.

March 29,2022 Connection and Empathy in Response to Behaviour

May 19,2022 Understanding Addiction and Addictive Behaviours

We hope you save these dates in your calendar and join us for these learning opportunities. For more information and to register, please visit the mental health and well-being page on the SCDSB website: <https://bit.ly/3jGaC74>. Pine River Institute is a live-in treatment centre and outdoor leadership experience for youth aged 13 to 19 struggling with addictive behaviours and often other mental health issues. Combining therapy with a fully accredited education program, PRI reinforces the healthy life skills required for a successful future. CFI@PRI extends PRI's knowledge, experience and evidence-informed treatment approach to families and care providers in the community to support youth mental wellness and prevent the need for more intensive interventions. Learn more about PRI by visiting their website at [www.pineriverinstitute.com](http://www.pineriverinstitute.com).

## EarlyON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

Did you know that EarlyON Child and Family Centres offer free programs, resources, parenting courses, developmental screening, as well as referrals to community programs? All children, prenatal through 6 years of age can participate with their parent(s) or caregiver(s). In Simcoe County there are four agencies that deliver EarlyON Child and Family programs. Services are available in English and French and can be explored by visiting [www.simcoe.ca/ChildrenandCommunityServices/Pages/EarlyON.aspx](http://www.simcoe.ca/ChildrenandCommunityServices/Pages/EarlyON.aspx) . EarlyON Child and Family Centre staff are trained in child development and facilitation of educational programs for parents/guardians and children. Coming soon; a parent/child interactive program for parents/guardians and children who are starting Kindergarten this fall! Stay tuned for registration information.

## HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION EVENTS FOR GRADE 8 STUDENTS

Is your child starting Grade 9 next year? High school information events will happen virtually this winter. Student leaders and staff at the school will give an overview of what's new and what to expect. Please visit your school's website at [mpr@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:mpr@scdsb.on.ca) for more information.

## [MATH @HOME PARENT SERIES](#)

Thank you to everyone who completed the parent survey. The winners of the prizes will be notified in January. The SCDSB math department is offering three evening virtual sessions for caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions will focus on practical and fun ways to support students with their mathematics learning and engagement at home. Participants will receive a math pack of resources to use at home and must pre-register for each of the sessions by visiting <https://bit.ly/SCDSBMathAtHomeRegistration>.

### **Making math connections @ Home**

Thursday, March 24, 2022

7 to 8 p.m.

This session will explore where we find numbers, patterns, measures and shapes in our daily lives.

Participants will learn about practical ways to help their child notice and wonder about the math in their world.

### **Problem solving @Home**

Wednesday, April 26, 2022

7 to 8 p.m.

This session will explore how to encourage children to be active thinkers and problem solvers, both in math and around the house. Participants will learn about how solving problems at home can help their children solve problems in math class.

### **Having Fun with Math Facts @Home**

Thursday, May 12, 2022

7 to 8 p.m.

This session will explore practical, intentional, and fun ways to practice math facts at home.

Participants will leave with ideas, games, and activities to support their child with becoming fluent with their math facts.

Participants must pre-register for the sessions they wish to attend. Registered participants will receive a Math @Home pack of hands-on resources that will be sent to the school indicated on the registration form.

## [INTERESTED IN LEARNING MORE ABOUT THE WAYS THAT THE SCDSB SUPPORTS STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATION NEEDS AND THEIR FAMILIES? JOIN US FOR A VIRTUAL SPECIAL EDUCATION OUTREACH SERIES](#)

In 2022, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is hosting virtual special education outreach sessions to assist parents/caregivers in learning more about programs, supports and ways that we work together to support students with special education needs.

### **Supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder in SCDSB schools and within our communities – information for parents/caregivers**

Feb. 17

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### **Supporting students as they transition into school, from one school to another, and from school upon graduation – information for parents/caregivers**

April 12

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

### **Working with families to create safe and supportive environments for children who have experienced trauma – information for parents/caregivers**

May 10

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Participants are asked to register in advance. Information to access the sessions will be shared via email with individuals who have pre-registered. Learn more about each session and how to register on the SCDSB website at

<https://bit.ly/3s8OBm8>.

## **TVO/TFO RESOURCES FOR ELEMENTARY STUDENTS**

Looking for a straight-forward, engaging, free resource you can trust to support your child's learning during the pandemic? TVOntario (TVO) and Télévision française de l'Ontario (TFO) have released digital elementary curriculum-based content, including engaging learning activities linked to Grade 1 to 8 curriculum.

Resources are available in English for the following subjects:

- Language
- Math
- Science and Technology
- Social Studies
- History
- Geography

Families can visit [tvlearn.com](http://tvlearn.com) to access these resources. Resources are also available in French at [www.ontario.ca/fr/page/apprendre-la-maison](http://www.ontario.ca/fr/page/apprendre-la-maison) and families are encouraged to visit [tfo.org](http://tfo.org) for educational videos and games.

## **KEEP CONNECTED WITH OUR SCHOOL AND WITH THE SCDSB**

It's important to get accurate information about what's going on at your school and at the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). Here are some ways to do that:

- Subscribe to our school's website by visiting the 'What's New' section at <http://alr.scdsb.on.ca>. You can sign up to receive emails about school news updates and information during emergency situations. It's easy to subscribe – visit our website and click the 'Subscribe' link at the very top of the page. Provide your email and click 'Subscribe'; a message will be sent to your inbox with a link to click to confirm that you want to subscribe. You can unsubscribe at any time using the link at the bottom of each email.
- Sign up to receive SCDSB media releases by clicking the 'Subscribe' button at [www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca).
- Follow the SCDSB on Twitter (@SCDSB\_Schools), Facebook (facebook.com/SCDSB) and Instagram (instagram.com/scdsb).