



Algonquin Ridge Elementary School

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ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS- MARCH 2021

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Hello Algonquin Ridge Families,

Since our return to in-school learning at the beginning of February, many of you have taken a moment to share positive messages of support and appreciation for the staff who worked diligently through January to make online learning an overall success. Approaching the situation with an open mind, a positive attitude and a commitment to solving problems as they appeared, we were able to work as a team with students and families to ensure the continuation of learning through this period. Our students have returned to school eager to learn and reconnect with teachers, support staff and friends. They have also done an amazing job of returning to the safety procedures we have had in place since September and adjusting to new expectations (such as K-8 inside and outside mask wearing).

For those of you who wish to take a moment to share your words of support and thanks for a staff member we encourage you to visit the SCDSB website to “Nominate A STAR” as part of the Employee Recognition Program. When you select the Community Tab and then SCDSB Stars (https://www.scdsb.on.ca/community/scdsb_stars) you will be asked: *Have you had a SCDSB STAR encounter? Has a staff person in one of our schools or education facilities gone above and beyond to inspire a positive change in your life, or the life of your child? If you know an outstanding SCDSB teacher, custodian, educational assistant, early childhood educator or office staff who has done something wonderful to support students in our system, nominate them for a STAR. Efforts to provide an outstanding learning environment and experience shouldn't go unnoticed.*

While our return to school has gone well in general, we have noticed a significant increase in the number of cars choosing to enter the Kiss-N-Ride loop at the beginning and end of day, and in the number of students arriving late daily. Both of these habits are matters of concern when it comes to the smooth operation of our building while maintaining safety. As we have asked many times in the past, please make every effort to either have your children walk to school, or at least part of the way to school (especially the older students). As was explained in the ‘back to school’ letter sent to you on Friday Feb. 5th, students arriving late should not attempt to join groups of students still entering the building since our entry routines require us to keep classroom groups separated and socially distanced. For classes remaining outside for outdoor education activities, phys-ed or daily physical activity, the teachers complete attendance, put devices away and then need to focus on student supervision rather than returning to the school to alter the electronic daily attendance records. Late arrivals also impact the front office since as many as 20-30 students sometimes need to be welcomed, have hands sanitized, attendance altered and then travel the building (sometimes escorted) to be connected with their class already in progress. We recognize that being late occasionally is unavoidable but stress the need to establish responsible habits to make students’ school experience more positive.

Have a great full 4 and a half weeks of school in March—for the first time ever!

Karen Moffitt & Cory McKeown

ARES Administration

Character Attribute for the month of March

Integrity - we act justly and honourably in all that we do.

More information about Character Education can be found here: www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character_education

CALENDAR

February 14, 2021 – Valentine’s Day
February 15, 2021 – Family Day – **school closed**
February 24, 2021 – Pink Shirt Day
March 17, 2021 – St Patrick’s Day
March 24, 2021 – Grade 8 grad photos
April 2, 2021 – Good Friday – **school closed**
April 5, 2021 – Easter Monday – **school closed**
April 12-16, 2021 – Spring Break- **school closed**
April 14, 2021 – International Day of Pink
April 22, 2021 – Earth Day

UPDATES TO THE COVID-19 SCHOOL SCREENING TOOL AND PROCESS

Each day, families are asked to ensure that their child(ren) complete the COVID-19 school screening tool prior to coming to school. Secondary school students are required to confirm with their teacher that the COVID-19 school screening tool has been completed at the beginning of each day.

In an effort to strengthen health and safety measures and help reduce the spread of COVID-19, the criteria in the provincial COVID-19 school screening tool has been updated by the Chief Medical Officer of Health. The updated provincial direction states that students and staff with any new or worsening symptoms of COVID-19 (as indicated in the screening tool), even those with only one symptom, must stay home until:

- They receive a negative COVID-19 test result.
- They receive an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional; or,
- It has been 10 days since their symptom onset, and they are feeling better.

In addition, all asymptomatic household contacts of symptomatic individuals are required to quarantine until the symptomatic household member receives a negative COVID-19 test result or receives an alternative diagnosis by a health care professional.

The updated COVID-19 school screening tool is available on the Ontario government’s website here: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/school-screening/>. A printable version of the COVID-19 school screening tool can be found here: <https://bit.ly/3uIap6V>. More information is also available on the SCDSB website at www.scdsb.on.ca/covid-19.

DAYS OF AWARENESS AND RECOGNITION TAKING PLACE IN MARCH

Throughout the year, there are many awareness days that focus on different causes and recognition. The Simcoe County District School Board has developed a list of these days as a guide for schools. Schools may participate in recognizing some or all of these days in various ways. This list is not exhaustive. Following are the days of awareness and recognition that the SCDSB will recognize during the month of March:

March 5	National Employee Appreciation Day
March 8	International Women’s Day
March 14	Pi Day
March 21	World Down Syndrome Day International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
March 26	Earth Hour (in schools)

WHAT'S NEW IN THE LIBRARY

March Madness Fun

Participating classes are taking March Madness to a whole new level. March Book Madness has begun! For the Sweet 16 round, 16 picture books have been selected. Each day students will vote on their favorite book out of the pair. The winner of each pair will make up the Elite 8. We will continue with the Final Four, the Final Two, until a champion book is crowned.

Families that would like to participate are welcome to join in on the fun. Their child may have already read the books in class, but rereading books is a great way to expand knowledge and solidify understanding.

Sweet 16 voting must be completed by March 12. After this date, a link will be sent out, via your child's teacher, to families with the new brackets and the Elite 8 books chosen through voting. Enjoy!

[CLICK HERE to see the brackets for the Sweet 16](#)

[As a family, CLICK HERE to vote on your favourite book from each pair](#)

School Wide Virtual Fitness Challenge

Algonquin Ridge students are taking fitness to the next level. As a school, students have the opportunity to create fitness goals and tackle the highest mountain in the world. You heard that right, our Rapids are working together to climb Mount Everest. With daily fitness challenges embedded into announcements and set running goals completed during gym, students will combine their efforts to virtually climb the 64.2 Km hike to the summit. Students will earn virtual postcards and a school medal. They will learn interesting facts about the climb via Google Earth views. They are even going to contribute to the sustainability of the planet by helping to virtually plant 5 trees along the way! Ask your child about this virtual adventure.

Stay tuned for more adventures around the world taking on Dance....and maybe a family fitness challenge too!

Language, Language and More Language

Do you want to get your child reading more at home? Here is a great language resource that will provide your family with many opportunities to read, learn and spend quality time with each other!

[CLICK HERE to open a Choice Board](#) that has live links attached to each picture. When you click on a picture it will take you to that specific resource.

KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2021 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 2021? 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.



GRADE 8 GRADUATION PHOTOS

Grade 8 graduation photos will be taken on Wednesday, March 24th. Online grade 8 students are to meet at the front door of the school at 3:00-3:15 pm. Please wear a mask and maintain social distancing requirements. Bring your best smile!

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!



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 Enter Team Code: SLQPHH If you have any questions, reach out to School Council at 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.

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.

KEEP CONNECTED WITH OUR SCHOOL AND WITH THE SCDSB

It is important to get accurate information about what is 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 emergencies. It is easy to subscribe – visit our website and click the 'Subscribe' link at the very top of the page. Provide your email and click 'Subscribe'; and we will send you an email 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.
- ([instagram.com/scdsb](https://www.instagram.com/scdsb)).

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 <https://simcoecountyschoolbus.ca/>. Our school is in the **CENTRAL** zone.



When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, as in previous years. It is always a family decision whether or not it is safe for your child(ren) to leave for school under severe weather conditions.

This year, please note that students who are unable to attend school due to bus cancellations will be able to access learning materials on the digital learning platform assigned by their teacher, either Desire2Learn (D2L) or Google Classroom.

Students in the Learn@Home program will continue with regular programming as scheduled.

The SCSTC 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/SCSTC_SchoolBus) for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here:

<https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx>.

SIMCOE COUNTY DISTRICT SCHOOL BOARD (SCDSB) TO DELIVER FIRST-EVER STUDENT CENSUS IN APRIL 2021

At the SCDSB we are committed to identifying and removing barriers within our system that impact equity, achievement and well-being of students, and to ensuring that all students are offered supportive, inclusive and respectful learning environments. To support these efforts, we must learn more about our students.

In April 2021, the SCDSB will hold its first student census. The confidential SCDSB Student Census 2020-2021 will be used to collect identity-based student data so that systemic barriers can be identified. The results will guide our focus on programs, supports and resources to address inequities within our system.

Between April 1 and 30, 2021 students in Grade 7 to 12 and parents/guardians of students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 will be invited to participate in the SCDSB Student Census 2020-2021. To support the delivery of the SCDSB student census, the SCDSB is hosting information sessions in March.

Details regarding the information sessions, including how to register, will be available on the SCDSB website. For further information regarding the SCDSB Student Census 2020-2021, visit the SCDSB website or contact Lisa Newton, Manager of Research and Decision Support, at census@scdsb.on.ca or 705-734-6363 x11731.

[MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING RESOURCE HUB](#)

COVID-19 has, and will, impact the mental health of people everywhere. Kids Help Phone has seen an unprecedented surge of young people feeling more stressed than usual reaching out during this global pandemic. Finding accurate information and appropriate resources can be hard. [Jack.org](#), [School Mental Health Ontario](#) and [Kids Help Phone](#) have partnered to bring you all the information needed in one easy-to-access hub so that youth mental health remains top of mind, and our communities are able to easily access the education, tools, support and reliable information they need. Please share widely with the young people in your life.

Jack.org is a Canadian non-profit organization focused on helping youth understand how to take care of their mental health and look out for others.

[SCREEN-FREE ACTIVITIES TO KEEP KIDS ACTIVE](#)

Finding ways to break up your daily schedule with active play will pay off in the long term, and encourages creative thinking, problem solving and so much more. Here are some ideas for screen-free activities to keep kids active while having fun:

[ENJOY THE GREAT OUTDOORS](#)

Breathe in some fresh winter air as you explore your local trails, parks and toboggan hills or have a family snowman-building contest to see who can make the most creative snow sculpture!

[GET CREATIVE WITH INDOOR GAMES](#)

If it's too cold to explore the outdoors, there's plenty of fun indoor activities that use common items from around the house. Try playing a game of 'bedsheet parachute' – grab a twin-sized or smaller bedsheet or blanket to make a DIY parachute. Then get the kids (or even you!) to hold onto each end of the bedsheet and work together to try to shake a small stuffed animal or ball off the parachute!

[LEAD YOUR FAMILY IN A GROUP WORKOUT](#)

When you're active with your kids, it sends them an important message about healthy living. Try leading your family in a group workout from the comfort of your home. If you're looking for ideas and inspiration for family-friendly workouts, visit [YMCA at Home](#) where you can find activities for all ages and fitness levels. Once you learn the basic movements of the workout, gather your family and exercise together. It's always more fun to exercise with a buddy!

[NUTRITION AND SELF-REGULATION](#)

Self-regulation is the ability to manage your own energy states, emotions, behaviours and attention in ways that are socially acceptable and help achieve positive goals such as learning at school, having good relationships and being well. Healthy eating may improve your child's ability to self-regulate.

Eat more:

- ✓ Plant-based foods: colourful vegetables, fruits, whole grains
- ✓ Healthy proteins: nuts, seeds, legumes, fish, seafood

Eat less:

- ✓ Sugar and sodium
- ✓ Highly processed, refined foods

Focus on:

- ✓ Water or milk to drink
- ✓ More than one type of food at every meal or snack
- ✓ Eating regularly
- ✓ Creating a calm, relaxing environment where you can enjoy your food and not feel rushed

MAKING 'CENTS' OF MONEY MATTERS

All students need the skills and knowledge to take responsibility for managing their personal financial well-being with confidence, competence and a critical and compassionate awareness of the world around them. In the 2020 math curriculum there is focus on financial literacy learning in Grades 1 to 8, including understanding the value and use of money over time, how to manage financial well-being and the value of budgeting.

Students build their skills and knowledge about the value and use of money, how decisions impact personal finances, as well as develop consumer and civic awareness.

Students will:

- Learn how to manage finances responsibly, such as creating a budget to help save enough money to buy something they want such as a book, toy or a video game.
- Begin to develop a greater awareness as consumers and contributors in the local and broader economic system.

Wondering how you can support the development of your child's financial literacy skills at home? Check out some of these great tips and resources!

Tips:

- Find daily, real-world opportunities to talk about money in the contexts of earning, saving, spending and giving.
- Consider the financial habits you want to instill in your child and talk about them.
- Involve your child in making decisions about purchases for household items and compare the costs of different items. (e.g. We need to save money to repave the driveway, so we're going to cut down on spending. Do you have any ideas?)

Resources:

- A Parent's Guide to Financial Literacy
http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/parents/financial_guide.html
- Peter Pig's Money Counter
<https://practicalmoneyskills.ca/games/peterpigs/>
- Help Your Kids Understand Money: A Parent's Guide
<http://www.themint.org/parents/parenting-guide.html>

