



## **Algonquin Ridge Elementary School**

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**Cory McKeown**  
Principal

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Vice-Principal

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### [OCTOBER 2016 NEWSLETTER](#)

#### **MESSAGE FROM ADMINISTRATION**

Our school year is well under way and we're already coming up to the Thanksgiving long weekend. It has been a busy but good start of the year. Students and teachers alike are working hard and many good things are happening at our school. Many school sports, clubs and activities have begun. Student Leadership Teams, Eco-club, Flag Football, Basketball, Cross-Country and Volleyball teams, Safety Patrollers, Lunchroom Helpers and Recycling Teams are only some of the opportunities that students have to get involved in Algonquin school life (right now) and to learn about responsibility, empathy and teamwork. Many of our parents are also volunteering their time to enrich our school, either as a classroom or office helper, with pizza or milk, or in a more formal capacity on our School Council.

We'd like to thank the dedicated group of parents who came out to our first School Council meeting to discuss school life, fundraising and this year's priorities. Council meetings are open to all parents and are a great way to learn more about your school, to get involved and to work with a team to improve school life for your children. Our next meeting will be in the Learning Commons (Library) on Tuesday November 8 at 6:30.

We'd also like to introduce this year's Council:

Leigh Nykolation & Lisa Duhamel—Co-Chairs

Alison Currie—Secretary

Jenny Harris—Fundraising Coordinator

Nancy Hyde & Jillian Pink—Treasurers

David Heidman—Staff Representative

We've had some staffing changes since the beginning of the school year. We say farewell to Ms. Tessier and thank her for her service to our school.

Finally, we want to encourage all our families to subscribe to our school website as it will be there that you will be able to find regular information updates, news items and reminders about what is happening at our school. Simply visit our site at <http://alr.scdsb.on.ca> and click on the subscribe link at the top of the page to receive regular email updates when important information has been added to the website.

## **CALENDAR**

October 7 - Grade 7 field trip to Tiffin Centre  
October 10 – Thanksgiving – school closed  
October 11 - Immunizations for grade 7 & 8 students  
October 11 - Grade 6 V.I.P. program begins  
October 12 - Cross country regional race  
October 18 - School Photo Day for JK-Grade 3  
October 18 - County Cross Country race at Mount St. Louis  
October 19 - School Photo Day for Grade 4-8  
October 19 - Me to We team trip to Toronto for We Day  
October 21 - P.A. Day - no school for students  
November 11 - Student Progress Reports sent home  
November 14-18 - Parent-Teacher conferences  
November 16-18 - Scholastic Book Fair  
November 17 - JK-Gr.3 field trip to Georgian Theatre  
November 18 - PA day for parent-teacher conferences



## **NOVEMBER PARENT-TEACHER CONFERENCES**

Last month at our Meet the Teacher event, parents had the opportunity to schedule a time in the week of November 14-18 to meet with their child's classroom teacher to discuss their progress. If you were unable to sign up for a time, please contact your child's teacher to arrange one. We hope that every parent will be able to attend to discuss their child's progress at school after the first progress report is sent home on November 11.

## **MESSAGE FROM DIRECTOR OF EDUCATION KATHI WALLACE**

At the Sept. 28 Board Meeting, it was shared publicly that I will retire as of December 31, 2016. As I'm sure you can imagine, this decision was challenging for me. I love what I do—I have felt this way in every role during my 39 years in this board.

It's truly been an honour to serve the students and families of Simcoe County throughout my career. I've had the privilege of working with fantastic staff, parents and community partners. I've been surrounded by skilled, passionate and caring people.

My focus remains on our work as I complete my time here. The Board of Trustees have now started the search for a new director. We will also continue with our strategic planning consultation and analysis. The input provided by our staff, students, parents and community members will be invaluable to the board and senior administration, including the new director, as they move the system forward. If you haven't already, I encourage you to add your ideas by visiting [www.scdsb.on.ca/difference](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/difference).

I am also looking forward with optimism to this next stage of my life. It's a chance to spend some more time with my family. This includes my growing group of beautiful grandchildren who provide that daily reminder of life's wonder and simple joys. It's that same reminder I cherish from my days as a classroom teacher.

### **SCHOOL PHOTO DAY**

Our school photo day is fast approaching! Please remember to mark October 18 & 19 on your calendar, as Edge Imaging will be in the school that day capturing everyone's smiles. Edge provides a variety of photo options to capture your child's true personality, preserving all their school day memories. For more information on photo day, please visit [www.edgeimaging.ca](http://www.edgeimaging.ca) for answers to frequently asked questions.

### **SEEDS BEFORE AND AFTER SCHOOL CHILD CARE**

Welcome back to another wonderful school year! The children have been exploring the outdoor environment and the forest. In our exploration we have noticed the different colours within nature. Outdoor play has been shown to be important to good health, increase levels of activity, decrease negative emotions and influence positive behavior. (Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit). We will be offering P.A day care at Algonquin Ridge this year, if you require care please call Sheena Bardai at 705-726-3770. Before school spaces are still available as well!

### **IT'S SOCKTOBER!**

The kindergarten classes will be collecting socks for the Barrie out of the Cold program. This program offers shelter, meals and clothing for homeless people in Barrie. The Out of the Cold website states that "...for homeless people, it is their feet that suffer the most trauma as they spend so much time standing outside where it's hard to keep their feet warm and dry. A pair of clean, dry socks not only provides warmth, but can also help prevent blisters and infections as well". We have decided to help provide a little bit of comfort for those who need it. All families need to do is purchase a pair or two of new, unused men's or women's socks and send them to school with your child. The dollar store is a great place to find socks. All socks must be sent to school by October 11th. Late socks cannot be accepted as the drop off date is October 11th. Our kindergarten students appreciate your help as they learn to help others in their community.

### **GIVING BACK TO THE SCHOOL COMMUNITY - VOLUNTEER IN OUR SCHOOL**

Volunteers are an important part of what makes our school a great place to learn and grow. We value and appreciate the support of our volunteers. There are many opportunities available, including school council, breakfast clubs, reading help, assisting in the classroom or library and much more. Everyone who volunteers in a school must have a criminal record check which includes a Vulnerable Sector Screening. Please call or visit the school office for more information about opportunities available or if you'd like to volunteer!

### **PAY FOR FIELD TRIPS, LUNCH DAYS, ETC. WITH SCHOOLCASH ONLINE**

The SchoolCash Online program is available at our school, offering parents the option to pay online for lunch days and other items. Parents who sign up will receive a notification when a new item becomes available for purchase. Items are personalized to each student. Parents use a secure online account to process payments, and can either make a one-time payment for each item as it occurs, or load money to carry a balance in the online account to make payments in the future. To create an online account, go to [simcoecounty.schoolcashionline.com](http://simcoecounty.schoolcashionline.com). Please contact the school office with any questions.

## **WHAT'S THE SCDSB DIFFERENCE? WE NEED TO HEAR FROM YOU!**

We need your help developing the new strategic plan for the Simcoe County District School Board. The purpose of a strategic plan is to set goals and directions that will guide the work of our organization and help us realize our vision of a community of learners achieving full potential. We want to know:

- What does the SCDSB do already to help us realize our vision of a community of learners achieving full potential? (What are we doing well?)
- What is the most important thing that we can begin to do to help us realize our vision? (What else can we do to improve?)
- What role do you think SCDSB schools play or should play in your community?

Get involved: Visit [www.scdsb.on.ca/difference](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/difference) to take our survey and complete the *Where should we invest* sorting activity to help identify priority areas.

- Follow our @scdsb\_schools Twitter account and join our #SCDSBDifference Twitter chat to share your ideas on Thurs., Oct. 6 at 8 p.m.

Other consultation activities: We are conducting on-the-spot interviews with parents and students at select schools across Simcoe County.

We'll use the input to identify the key areas stakeholders think the SCDSB should focus on. We will also review research on effective practices in education, our own data and the expectations we receive from the Ministry of Education. This information will help the Board of Trustees set our priorities. The strategic plan will outline how—together—we inspire and empower learning for life. Ultimately, our strategic priorities should move us toward our vision of a community of learners achieving full potential.

## **STUDENT ACCIDENT INSURANCE AVAILABLE FOR EXTRA-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES AND TRIPS**

Student injuries at school, during school events, and extra-curricular activities (athletics, clubs, and out-of-province/out-of-country trips) are not covered by the school board or its insurance company. While every precaution is taken to provide a safe learning environment, accidents can happen. It is essential that all students participating in extra-curricular activities have adequate insurance coverage. The SCDSB has selected *Insure My Kids* as an option for parents to consider. The coverage is for 24 hours a day and offers a variety of plans at reasonable prices. Coverage can be purchased online at [www.insuremykids.com](http://www.insuremykids.com).



## **STAY UPDATED, GET INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR SCHOOL AND SCHOOL BOARD**

Want to ensure you are receiving up-to-date, accurate information about what's going on at your school and our school board? Here's how:

- You can subscribe to our school's website by clicking on 'Subscribe' at the top of our school website: <http://alr.scdsb.on.ca>. You can sign up to receive emails about school news updates and information during emergency situations. When you fill out your email and click Subscribe, an email 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.
- For Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) media releases and event information, visit the 'News' section under 'About Us' at the SCDSB's website: [www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca). You can also subscribe to receive board media releases, event information and/or job postings via email by visiting [www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca) and clicking on 'Subscribe' at the top of the page.
- Follow the SCDSB on Twitter (@SCDSB Schools), Facebook (facebook.com/SCDSB) and Instagram (instagram.com/scdsb)
- Check out our *Sharing Simcoe* blog ([www.sharingsimcoe.com](http://www.sharingsimcoe.com)), where we share stories of our amazing students, staff and community members.
- For school bus transportation information, visit the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC)'s website at: [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). And remember to bookmark the school bus information page at: [www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) for bus delay and cancellation information on inclement weather days. Notifications of bus delays can be emailed to families and students that subscribe to receive their specific bus delay notification through the SCSTC website. Subscribe here: <https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/>.

## **FROM THE HEALTH UNIT: ENSURE YOUR CHILD'S IMMUNIZATION RECORD IS UP-TO-DATE**

The Ontario Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) requires the health unit to have up-to-date immunization records for all students attending school. According to ISPA (2014), students are required to be vaccinated against the following diseases:

- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Polio and Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (must have two doses after the first birthday)
- Meningococcal Disease (must have one dose after the first birthday & Men-C-ACYW in Grade 7)
- Varicella (chickenpox) - only for those born 2010 and after

The health unit **does not** receive immunization information directly from doctor's offices. Please contact the health unit each time your child receives a vaccine from their health care provider.

What you can do:

- check your child's yellow immunization card
- contact your child's health-care provider to obtain records or get missing vaccinations
- go to <http://www.smdhu.org/immsonline> to enter the complete record, or fax a completed record to 705-726-3962

### **FROM THE HEALTH UNIT: SMOKE-FREE MOVIES SUPPORT HEALTHY CHOICES FOR OUR KIDS**

Parents are always doing their best to protect their kids from harm. Have you ever wondered how movies influence our children? Research shows that seeing smoking in movies has a direct impact on youth smoking. In fact, the more often kids see smoking in the movies, the more likely they are to smoke. So why is smoking allowed in children and youth-rated movies? Movies influence kids. Make them smoke free. For more info visit the health unit website: [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org) or [www.smokefreemovies.ca](http://www.smokefreemovies.ca).

### **OCTOBER IS INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH**

Did you know that October is International Walk to School month? It is a great way for children to get their recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day and also gives parents and staff a chance to be part of a worldwide event that celebrates the many benefits of walking. Get in on the fun and try these activities:

- Create a walking group/"bus" to and from school
- Create a fun walking challenge for your school community involving students, parents and teachers
- Create and sign a Walk to School pledge

Check out the website at [www.saferoutestoschool.ca](http://www.saferoutestoschool.ca) for more information. You can also call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 and speak with a public health nurse or visit the health unit website at [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org).

### **FIRE PREVENTION WEEK IS OCTOBER 9-15: JOIN THE *DON'T WAIT, CHECK THE DATE* SELFIE CHALLENGE**

Fire Prevention Week is October 9 to 15, 2016 and local fire departments want you to join the *Don't Wait, Check the Date!* Selfie challenge. Smoke alarms wear out over time and need to be replaced within the time frame indicated by the manufacturer, usually 10 years. The date of manufacture is indicated on the back of the smoke alarm and the expiry date is taken from that date. Smoke alarms are required on every floor of your home and outside all sleeping areas. Test all of your smoke alarms monthly by pushing the test button on the alarm, and replace batteries at least once a year or when the alarm's low battery signal begins to chirp.

Families are challenged to take a selfie of their family checking the expiry date of their smoke alarms and post it on social media using #checkthed8. For more information about testing and replacing your smoke alarms, visit: [www.ontario.ca/firemarshal](http://www.ontario.ca/firemarshal).

### **EYE SEE...EYE LEARN PROGRAM OFFERS FREE GLASSES FOR JUNIOR KINDERGARTEN STUDENTS**

The Eye See...Eye Learn program provides comprehensive eye exams by local optometrists to Junior Kindergarten students. The eye exams are covered under the Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) when parents show their child's health card. There is no out-of-pocket cost for the eye exam and if the child requires a pair of glasses, they will receive them free of charge from a participating optometrist. More information, visit [www.Eyeseeyelearn.ca](http://www.Eyeseeyelearn.ca).



**Character Education  
Assemblies  
2016 - 2017**

Character Assembly Themes	Character Assembly Dates
Caring/Official Welcome	Monday, October 3rd
Cooperation	Friday, October 28th
Courage	Friday, November 25th
Empathy	Thursday, December 22nd
Honesty	Thursday, January 26th
Inclusiveness	Friday, February 24th
Integrity	Friday, March 31st
Optimism	Friday, April 28th
Respect	Friday, May 26th
Responsibility	Wednesday, June 28th

**THINGS HAVE CHANGED! PLEASE TAKE NOTE:**

- This year, all Algonquin Ridge staff and students are invited to show their “RAPIDS pride” by wearing either **school clothing** or anything in our **school colours of BLUE and GREEN** on assembly days.
- Barring un-foreseen scheduling conflicts, all assemblies will take place at **11:40am**. Parents and families members are always invited to attend, but are asked to **arrive 10 minutes prior** to the assembly to **sign in** at the front foyer and find **a seat at the back of the gymnasium** in the designated area. (Thank you in advance for your cooperation! 😊)



**Monthly Spirit Days  
2016 - 2017**

Staff/Student-Selected Spirit Day Theme	Special Event Date
Inside Out Day	Friday, October 14th
Disco Day	Thursday, November 17th
Wacky Tacky Holi-Day	Friday, December 9 <sup>th</sup>
Pajama Day	Friday, January 13 <sup>th</sup>
Storybook/Movie Character Day	Friday, February 10 <sup>th</sup>
Celebrity Day	Friday, March 10 <sup>th</sup>
Future Me/Career Day	Friday, April 7 <sup>th</sup>
Rainbow Day	Friday, May 12 <sup>th</sup>
Proud to be Canadian Day	Friday, June 16 <sup>th</sup>

- All ARES staff and students are invited to join in the fun and **dress up according to each theme** on these special days to express themselves, have fun and show school spirit!
- Students will always be reminded of these special days over our **morning announcements** and in **classroom notices or agendas**, but be sure to **mark your home calendars**.
- **Colourful/seasonal clothing and accessories** are encouraged on **holidays** (i.e. Valentine's Day etc.).
- Please be mindful of all clothing choices to ensure that items are **safe and appropriate to wear to school**. For safety reasons, **props and masks should be left at home**.

-The RAPIDS Reps Leadership Team