



## 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

K. Moffitt  
Vice-Principal

---

### ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS APRIL 2023

#### Character attribute for the month of April – Optimism

**Optimism – we maintain a positive attitude and have hope for the future.**

More information about character education can be found here: [www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character\\_education](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character_education)

#### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

Hello Algonquin Ridge Families.

I am excited to be sharing news with you of our newest staff member—Willow (a 3-year-old miniature schnauzer/hypoallergenic breed) who will be based in the school office under the supervision of her handler (yours truly-Mr. McKeown). Willow has been trained and certified by Sweet Charity and is part of the Canine Ambassador Program supported by Simcoe County District School Board. She has completed a rigorous training and certification that includes both the Canadian Kennel Club Canine Good Neighbour certification and Sweet Charity's own Obedience and Control test. Our current plans will have Willow attend Algonquin Ridge no more than 1-2 days (or partial days) each week.

The goal of the dog in the school is to support staff and student well-being and positive outcome for everyone's mental health. Some of you will recall Tilley, who attended our school as our Canine Ambassador prior to Mrs. McIver's retirement (former librarian). Tilley was much loved by the students and staff of Algonquin Ridge and there can be no doubt that her presence in the school benefitted many. It is fortunate that we are still able to welcome Tilley, and her handler, to the school occasionally as Mrs. McIver supports several of our students as a school volunteer. Please let us know if you have any specific concerns regarding the presence of Willow/Tilley in our school and thank you for your on-going support.

In other news, please look for information in this newsletter and in dedicated Synervoice messages to the community about: April-Earth Month initiatives, Family Bingo (Thurs. May 4), Parking Lot reminders, new junior kindergarten registrations, and School Council Fundraising initiatives.

Finally, please take a moment to open and bookmark the school webpage: <https://scdsboncaalr.ss14.sharpschool.com/>. This resource has been somewhat neglected over the last few years as many of our traditions were put on hold, but we are excited to have it back and better than ever! Ms. Rossignol has been working hard to upload an abundance of school information, making this an important place for you to visit to access school information and communication.

Sincerely,

Cory McKeown

#### APRIL PA DAY

Please note that Friday, April 28 is a PA Day for all SCDSB students. Please refer to the 2022-23 School Year Calendar on the SCDSB website for more information: [scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/school\\_year\\_calendar](http://scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/school_year_calendar).

## CALENDAR

April 6 – Grade 8-Hamblin to Water Treatment Plant

April 7 – Good Friday – **school closed.**

April 10 – Easter Monday – **school closed.**

April 12 – Jr Girls Bball @ Maple Ridge – pm

April 12 – International Day of Pink

April 12 – Scanlon Creek – Grade 4 – Sherrit

April 13 – Scanlon Creek – Gray and O’Connell

April 19 – Jr Bball Zones @ ARES

April 20 – Grade 8 – Horie to Water Treatment Plant

April 21 – Spring into Clean School Event

April 22 – Earth Day

April 24 – Jr Girls Bball Zones @ ARES

April 24 – Community Helpers/Fire Prevention Presentation – Gr 1&2

April 25 – Jr Boys Bball Xover @ ARES

April 27 – Jr Girls Bball Xover – pm

Jr Boys Bball Regionals

April 28 – PA Day – **no school**

May 4 – Bingo Night – 6:30 – 8:00 pm

May 10 – Kindergarten Orientation Night 4-5pm

May 10 – Science Centre – Grade 6

May 11 – Medieval Times – Grade 4

May 11 – Collett to Water Treatment Plant

## REGARDING ATTENDANCE AND ATTENDANCE LETTERS

The following message pertaining to student attendance has been previously shared in school newsletters. We are including this here since we have just recently sent home another round of 'letters of concern' noting students high number of student absences (15+). These are intended to increase your awareness of the impact of missed days in the hopes that we will begin to see an improving pattern as move towards the last portion of our school year.

*Many of you ... will have received an attendance "letter of concern" which is issued when a student passes the **10 days absent** threshold. It is significant that this much school has been missed by this point in the year where we have just passed the half-way point. Should school days continue to be missed at the same rate, over 20 days of school will be missed this year, and this (one month of school) is the threshold for which the board policy requires a referral to our attendance counselor. The Ministry defines '**persistent absenteeism**' as the missing of **10% of school days which is 19 days per year**. We have many students who have passed this milestone as well.*

*We encourage you to support your child(ren)'s education by making positive attendance a priority by doing your best to avoid unnecessary absences, lates and early dismissals.*

*Poor or inconsistent attendance 'is' (often) the main obstacle standing between a student and academic success. We know that students with poor attendance miss critical lessons and content, miss opportunities for review and teacher interventions, and often experience difficulties with peer relationships. Succeeding in small group learning activities and shared assignments can be a significant challenge with gaps in attendance and peers quickly learn who can and cannot be counted on. By '1<sup>st</sup> term report card', missing no more than 10 days is a good measuring stick as to your child's pattern of attendance. Thank you for your efforts at home to establish positive learning habits that students will need to be successful in secondary school and eventually in the work place.*

*We appreciate your efforts to maintain good attendance and to arrive at school on time each day. If you would like to discuss your child's attendance and how we may be able to support improving attendance please reach out first to your child's teacher to discuss and admin where appropriate.*

*Sincerely,*

*Algonquin Ridge ES Admin*

## 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:

- 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)

### BIG BOX OF CARDS FUNDRAISER

Back by popular demand is our **Big Box of Cards Fundraiser**! Each box is filled with beautiful, high-quality, hand-crafted cards.

This year, we have three types of card boxes available. They include **35 All Occasion Cards, 35 All Birthday Cards and 50 Holiday Cards**.

Each box sells for a low price of **\$35.00 each**. Don't delay. Our fundraiser starts today and runs until **Monday, April 17th!** Head over to school cash online to buy your boxes today! <https://www.schoolcashonline.com>

See the flyer attached for more details. Below are some links to see all of the cards being offered. Feel free to share this deal with your family and friends.

There is also a super-fun contest included in this fundraiser.

Birthday Cards Link - <https://www.bigboxfundraising.com/collections/frontpage/products/big-box-of-birthday-cards-new>

All Occasions Cards Link - <https://www.bigboxfundraising.com/collections/frontpage/products/big-box-of-cards>

Holiday Box Video - <https://streamable.com/6eplgo>

If you have any questions or concerns, please reach out to us via email at [councilchairlr@scdsb.on.ca](mailto:councilchairlr@scdsb.on.ca)

Sincerely,

Your School Council

### KINDERGARTEN REGISTRATION FOR SEPTEMBER 2023 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 2023? If so, we invite you to register your child for Kindergarten. To register online or for more information visit: [scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten](https://scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten).

### EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

The Simcoe County EarlyON Child and Family Centres have locations throughout Simcoe County. These centres offer a variety of services, including programs that help prepare children and parents/guardians for kindergarten. Programming will be offered in the spring of 2023. Check with your local EarlyON provider for dates and times. <https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe>

### LICENSED SUMMER SCHOOL AGE CHILD CARE PROGRAMS

Child care programs for children in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are provided by independent, third-party child care operators in some SCDSB schools. To support your child care needs, some operators offer child care over the summer holidays. Registration in advance is required. Please contact the child care operator directly to discuss fees and to register. More information and contact numbers can be found at [scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/childcare\\_before\\_after](https://scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after).

## EARTH MONTH

April is EARTH MONTH here at Algonquin Ridge. Throughout the entire month of April staff and students will be working hard to raise awareness of the challenges the earth is facing and trying to do their part to help. Here are some of the initiatives that we will be taking place.

**Every Tuesday is Garbageless/Litterless Lunch Day.** We are asking students and families to pack lunches that do not contain throw away items such as juice boxes, granola bar wrappers, individual yogurt containers etc. We encourage everyone to try to **pack reusable containers on Tuesdays** to reduce the amount of garbage our school produces.

**Every Wednesday is Walk 'n Wheel Day.** The transportation sector is responsible for 27 percent of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in Canada. Light-duty vehicles – the cars, vans and light-duty trucks we drive - are responsible for almost half of that total. ([Link to Gov Website](#)) We are asking families who drive vehicles every day to school to take steps to help reduce their fuel use and slow down the rate of climate change by **making a commitment to walk or wheel to school every Wednesday!**

**Every Friday is Earth Hour** - Canada's goal is to generate 90% of the country's electricity from non-emitting sources by 2030. Canada is working with provinces and territories to reduce environmental impacts from electricity generation both domestically and internationally. We can do our part by shutting off lights and unplugging technology. We are making a commitment to do that every Friday for 1 hour for the month of April. If you would like to join us, you can choose a time to shut down the lights and non-essential technology at home too!

Some of the other initiatives that will happen in the school are:

- Earth facts on the announcements every day. Chat with your child about what they learned about the earth.
- Schoolwide composting of all their organic food from lunches and lessons about what belongs in the Green Bins.
- April 21 - Earth Day Spirit Day. Dress in earth colours....brown, blues, greens, yellows.

Members of our A-Team will be visiting classrooms all month long and awarding points to those who are participating in all of these initiatives. The class with the most points and worked the hardest to help our planet earth will win a PIZZA Party! We are asking families to help support us in reducing our ecological footprint and help make the earth a cleaner and healthier place to live.

Rachelle Rossignol (she/her)  
Teacher-Librarian

## SCHOOL BINGO NIGHT

Please join us for our family Bingo Night, Thursday, May 4<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-8:00 pm. Hope to see everyone there!



## DAYS OF OBSERVANCE FOR APRIL

April-Sikh Heritage Month

April 2 – World Autism Awareness Day

April 4 – Mahavir Jayanti (Birthday) – Jainism

April 6-8 – Theravada New Year – Buddhism

April 6-13 – Pesach (Passover) – Judaism

April 7 – Good Friday – Christianity

April 8 – Farvardegan – Zoroastrianism

April 9- Easter – Christianity

April 10 – Easter Monday – Christianity

April 12 – International Day of Pink

April 13 – Vaisakhi – Sikhism

April 14 – Good Friday (J) – Christianity

April 16 – Easter (J) – Christianity

April 17-18 – Holocaust Memorial Day

April 18 – Lailat-ul-Qadr – Islam

April 21 – First Day of Ridvan – Bahai

April 21 – Jumatul Widha – Islam

April 21 – Eid-ul-Fitr – Islam

April 22 – Earth Day

April 23 -Zarathosht-no-diso - Zoroastrianism

April 29 – Ninth Day of Ridvan - Bahai



### **JOIN US! A LEARNING SERIES FOR PARENTS/GUARDIANS WITH PINE RIVER INSTITUTE**

Mental health and well-being continues to be a key strategic priority within the SCDSB. We are pleased to continue our partnership with the Centre for Family Initiatives at Pine River Institute (CFI@PRI) to provide several curated learning sessions focused on student mental health and well-being to SCDSB families, staff and within the SCDSB's broader school communities.

There are five webinars in the learning series specifically planned for parents, guardians, and other caregivers during this school year. The remaining sessions include:

April 27, 2023                      The Biology of Stress

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 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).

### **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 2023, 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. The remaining sessions include:

#### **Supporting students as they transition into school, from one school to another, and from school upon graduation**

April 20

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

#### **Working with families to create safe and supportive environments for children who have experienced trauma**

May 9

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 [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/special\\_education/special\\_education\\_outreach\\_sessions](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/special_education/special_education_outreach_sessions).

### **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:

- 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)

## MATH @HOME PARENT SERIES

Fostering a strong school-home partnership is an important part of reinforcing math learning at school and extending the learning beyond the classroom. Families are a child's first educator and help build a strong foundation for future success. The virtual math series outlined below is intended to support a positive attitude towards mathematics, enhance motivation and ultimate success.

The SCDSB math department is pleased to offer three evening virtual sessions for families and caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions will focus on practical and fun ways to support students with their mathematics learning and engagement at home. The first 200 registrants will receive a path pack of resources to use at home. Participants must pre-register for each of the sessions.

### **Making Math Connections @Home**

Wednesday, April 12  
7 – 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**

Tuesday, April 25  
7 – 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 11  
7 – 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 pack of hands-on resources that will be sent to the school indicated on their registration form.



## JOIN THE SCDSB'S PARENT INVOLVEMENT COMMITTEE FOR 'SAFE CONNECTIONS: NAVIGATING A DIGITAL WORLD'

On April 25, the Simcoe County District School Board's (SCDSB) Parent Involvement Committee (PIC) is hosting a virtual learning session for parents/guardians. *Safe connections: navigating a digital world* is a virtual event focused on digital mindfulness and well-being, and Internet safety.

This virtual event will run from 6 to 8:30 p.m. via Zoom. Presenters include:

- Chris Vollum, CMV SocialMedia
- Sergeant Aaron C. Arnett, Ontario Provincial Police
- Abby Zantingh, Imani's Place

Participants are asked to register in advance: <https://bit.ly/40tEg22>. Information to access the session will be shared via email with individuals who have pre-registered.

The PIC is a county-wide advisory committee made up of parents/guardians and community representatives from across Simcoe County. The committee works with SCDSB staff and trustees to support student success through parent/guardian engagement. Visit [scdsb.on.ca/elementary/parent/parent\\_involvement\\_committee](https://scdsb.on.ca/elementary/parent/parent_involvement_committee) for more information on the PIC.

## THE SCIENCE OF READING AND STRUCTURED LITERACY

The science of reading is a body of research that focuses on how students learn to read, what parts of the brain are utilized when learning to read, and what skills are ultimately required to be successful readers. Structured literacy is how educators take the knowledge gathered through research and apply it. There are five key components that make up an effective literacy program. Students need explicit instruction and repeated opportunities for practice with phonemic awareness, phonics, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension. Visit the following link to support your child's reading at home: <https://bit.ly/LiteracyHomeSupport>

## TENSE AND RELAX COPING STRATEGY

Well-being is a Strategic Priority in the Simcoe County District School Board, and our mental health and well-being department provides monthly strategies to support student and family well-being.

This month's strategy is tense and relax. Parents/guardians can guide their child/youth through a tense and relax muscle relaxation exercise to help them notice whether they feel tense or relaxed in a particular area and understand how their body feels when they are tense and relaxed. This helps children/youth to learn to sooth their body and mind and assists with regulating emotions during times of stress.

To practice tense and relax at home, have your child/youth get comfortable by either standing or sitting. Encourage them to keep their back straight, and shoulders and head relaxed. If they're comfortable, ask them to close their eyes. Have your child/youth intentionally tense and relax isolated body parts and be aware of how they feel when they tense their muscles and when they relax them. Children can be encouraged to: bring their shoulders up to their ears, hold for a count of 3, and relax; squeeze their hands into fists, hold for a count of 3, and relax; squeeze their stomach in as if fitting between a fence, hold for a count of 3, and relax; and, pushing their feet down to the ground, hold for a count of 3, and relax. Repeat the actions a few times and discuss how these body parts felt before, during, and after the exercise.

Parents/guardians can practice tense and relax at home any time with their child/youth to help them learn how to relieve tensions. Click on the following link to watch a guided video of tense and relax together:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4mQm0hux1Q&t=1s>.

Follow along the SCDSB's mental health and well-being social media accounts (@SCDSB\_MHWP) to see how well-being is being supported in our schools.

### **SIGNIFICANT NEED FOR FOSTER CAREGIVERS IN OUR COMMUNITY**

There is a significant need for foster caregivers in our local community. When a child or youth is brought into temporary foster care and placed outside of their community there is a loss of family, friends, schoolmates, teachers, and everything that is familiar to them. The increase in the number of foster homes across the communities in Simcoe Muskoka allows children and youth to remain connected to what is important to them.

Foster families are regular families wanting to give back to their community. When a family faces hardship and challenges, they need a community to support them and their children. In many situations, foster care can provide vital support that enables parents to address issues that are putting their children's safety and well-being at risk. Keeping children connected to their family, community, and extended supports is crucial. Foster caregivers provide a caring home that encourages a child or youth's growth, development, and well-being. If you're interested in becoming a foster caregiver in our community, please visit the foster recruitment website at [www.fosterconnexions.ca](http://www.fosterconnexions.ca) to learn more or call the foster recruitment line at 705-734-6777.

*Information provided by Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions*