



ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS JANUARY 2023

Character attribute for the month of January

Honesty - we behave in a sincere, trustworthy and truthful manner.

More information about character education can be found here:

www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character_education

PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

In January, the Principal's Message has often focused on the suggestion that we all begin the New Year with some time spent thinking about what positive changes we can make to ensure children and families are set up for success at school. This may mean that some effort is needed to adopt new habits or simply recognizing the need to re-commit to the routines and values that we know are important for everyone in our school community to be safe and successful. My suggestions have often included improving attendance patterns, walking to and from school and goal setting—it doesn't matter if the goals are academic, social, personal athletic etc. so long as they are achievable and there is a plan that includes specific actions or changes. Working with children to develop the habit of goal setting now will increase the likelihood that this valuable skill becomes a natural activity that will help them succeed for many years to come.

Returning briefly to the topics of attendance and walking to school:

- over the past 2 weeks we have seen a dramatic increase in the number of children being driven to and from school
- to keep traffic flowing safely it is critical that drivers are hyper-aware of pedestrians everywhere in the vicinity of the school, that cars pull forward as far as possible in the Kiss-N-Ride lane and that they all wait patiently to load/unload safely at the curb (drivers are reminded that the front of the school on Golden Meadow Rd. is a no-parking zone)
- walking to school, whenever possible, is always best for all students and the community
- the SCDSB attendance policy asks that the school send home 'letters of concern' when students reach the "10 days absent" point
- many of these letters have gone home over the past few weeks (we are not yet at the half-way point of the year)
- if you have received one of these letters, please know that we recognize that families may face a variety of challenges that affect attendance, but we also understand the significant impact that poor attendance has on student learning over time
- referrals for attendance support are made when student absences are greater than 20 (data shows that over 20 absences in a year are a significant risk factor for students and is defined as 'chronic absenteeism')
- we are here to support students and families so please feel free to connect with your child's teacher and/or admin if you would like to discuss student attendance

I am very thankful that many of you had the opportunity in December to drop in for a visit to our 1st Winter Fair in more than a few years. Although the hallways were a bit congested at times (I also take that as a sign of a highly successful event!) every visitor was patient and seemed to enjoy the many attractions and activities available to them. The misfit gift room is always a huge success based on the proud smiles evident on the little shoppers' faces—I hope that many more smiles and laughs were shared when their gifts were later opened. Local craft vendors, displays of artwork, card making, cupcake decorating, food and beverage sales and games in the gym were among the highlights of the night. A snowy carol sing outside capped off the fair with a special visit from a jolly man in red, adding a bit of magic to the evening. School mascot Diego and Frosty the Snowman visited the school earlier in the evening. Many thanks to the volunteers (School Council, parents, staff and Rapid graduates) who worked behind the scenes and in front of the crowds to make our event such a success. I'd also like to offer shout out's to JC Kettle Corn, Zehrs and Tim Hortons for their generous support.

Cory McKeown
Principal
705 737-4080 x 20304
Pronouns: He/His/Him
cmckeown@scdsb.on.ca

CALENDAR

Jan 26th – Comfy Cozy Day
Jan 27th – PA Day – **no school**
Jan 31st – Parent Reading Day/Book Talks Day
Feb 2nd – Grade 5-6 – Hardwood Hills
Feb 3rd – Celebrate Reading Assembly
Feb 17th – Report Cards home
Feb 20th – Family Day – **school closed**.
Feb 22-24th – Grade 8s to Kandalore

[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: www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten.

Let's talk Kindergarten! Join the SCDSB for a live virtual info session on Jan. 24

Do you have a child who is turning four in 2023 and are interested in learning about Kindergarten in the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB)? Join us Tuesday, Jan. 24 from 7 to 7:30 p.m. for a virtual info session. This presentation will be hosted by members of the SCDSB's early years team, who will provide parents/guardians with important information they need to know about Kindergarten. More details regarding this event will be shared on the SCDSB website and social media platforms in January.

Early learning and childcare

The Simcoe County EarlyON Child and Family Centres are excited to offer programs that help prepare children and parents for Kindergarten. Programming will be offered in the spring of 2023. For more information and to find your local EarlyON provider, visit: <https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe>.

[JANUARY PA DAY](#)

Please note that Friday, Jan. 27 is a PA Day for elementary SCDSB students. Please refer to the 2022-23 School Year Calendar on the SCDSB website for more information: www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/school_year_calendar.

[DAYS OF OBSERVANCE FOR JANUARY](#)

January is Tamil Heritage Month
January 19 – Epiphany (J) Christianity
January 22 – Lunar New Year/Maitreya Bodhisattva's Birthday – Buddhism
January 25 - Vasant Panchami - Hinduism
January 25 – Bell Let's Talk Day
January 27 – Family Literacy Day
January 27 – International Holocaust Remembrance Day
TBD – Bell Let's Talk Day

[HIGH SCHOOL INFORMATION EVENTS FOR GRADE 8 STUDENTS](#)

Is your child starting Grade 9 next year? High school information events will take place in person this winter! Student leaders and staff at the school will give an overview of what's new and what to expect. Learn about courses offered, as well as information about teams and clubs. Please visit the [SCDSB website](#) to find details on your high schools' info night, contact the school directly for more information.

[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.

[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. 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/SCSTC_SchoolBus) for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here: <https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx>.

[SPECIAL EDUCATION OUTREACH SERIES](#)

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.

Supporting students with autism spectrum disorder

Feb. 14

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

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

[ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TUTORING SERVICES](#)

The Ontario Ministry of Education is supporting tutoring services in schools and in the community until the end of March 2023. Schools offering after school tutoring services will advertise this service directly to parents/guardians. Community tutoring agencies provide free of charge tutoring to Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) students after hours in the community and online. Contact information for community tutoring agencies can be found at www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/tutoring_programs. Tutoring is available to all SCDSB students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. The SCDSB is also seeking members of the community to act as tutors in our schools during the school day. All candidates must apply through Apply to Education Posting #3361243. Candidates are required to be interviewed by SCDSB administration, provide professional references and complete a Vulnerable Sector Screen through their local police service. For more information, please email tutoring@scdsb.on.ca.

[ONTARIO MINISTRY OF EDUCATION TUTORING SERVICES](#)

The Ontario Ministry of Education is supporting tutoring services in schools and in the community until the end of March 2023. Schools offering after school tutoring services will advertise this service directly to parents/guardians. Community tutoring agencies provide free-of-charge tutoring to Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) students after hours in the community.

and online. Contact information for community tutoring agencies can be found at www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/tutoring_programs.

Tutoring is available to all SCDSB students from Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12. The SCDSB is also seeking members of the community to act as tutors in our schools during the school day. All candidates must apply through Apply to Education Posting #3361243. Candidates are required to be interviewed by SCDSB administration, provide professional references, and complete a Vulnerable Sector Screening through their local police service. For more information, please email tutoring@scdsb.on.ca.

Bite-sized math support at home

Are you looking for a quick way to support your child in developing their numeracy skills? Here are two resources that provide math activities that can be done in 5 minutes or less!

1. mathbeforebed.com/

We know that daily reading at home supports your child's literacy development; the same is true with math! This website provides images that can be used as a quick number talk before bed. Ask your child: "how many do you see?" and "how do you know?" This website has content for students of all ages.

2. www.parentengagementmatters.ca/math-storytime

Math Storytime is a tablet-based app for ages 5-8 that contains stories about basic math concepts. The stories provide the opportunity for talking about math at home.

3. **Foundational literacy skills - oral language**

Based on decades of research, we know the foundational literacy skills necessary for students to learn to read. Oral language is a natural process for us as humans, and our brain is wired for speaking and listening. As children interact with others, they acquire language skills, learning the pronunciation of words and their meaning. Oral language helps children learn the sound structure of language and build vocabulary and background knowledge. Oral language is the foundation for reading and writing.

Here are some ways you can support oral language development with your child(ren) at home:

- Sharing oral stories
- Active, everyday conversations
- Listening games such as Simon Says
- Dramatic play where your child takes on imaginary roles
- Reading books together

Four ways to improve your child's study habits

As we welcome the new year, people often take this time to reflect and make resolutions to form good habits for the year ahead. For some, these resolutions are personal goals, like cooking more meals at home, or joining a local gym – but what about setting family goals? As a parent, you can help your children set goals that will help them succeed at school, such as improving study habits.

It is difficult to see your child struggle with their schoolwork, but with these tips, your child will be able to effectively use their study time to thrive in school this year. Even better, working on these habits now will set them up for success for years to come — both in school and in the workplace. Here are four ways you can help improve your child's study habits:

1. Eliminate distraction

Learning requires focus and concentration to be successful. Removing distractions from your child's learning space is crucial. Portable technology is the largest distraction when it comes to studying. While studying, try to choose a location outside of their study space where they can leave their phone or tablet to minimize distractions. Of course, there are other types of distractions as well, such as a nearby TV or other children. If possible, find a study location away from the home's common space. Allow your child to turn on white noise or music if it helps them concentrate. It might aid in blocking out other obtrusive sounds so they can concentrate on their schoolwork.

2. Try alternatives to reading

It can get tiresome to read notes and textbooks to learn new information. Your child can only focus for so long before they begin to lose interest and tire of the subject. Try alternative strategies, such as creating flashcards, finding an informative video, listening to educational podcasts or audio books, or asking them to visualize a concept with a graphic or diagram. Kids learn in different ways. Find what works best for your child and use it to their advantage. Just be sure to keep the focus on studying and avoid the online distractions.

3. Give regular praise

Positive parenting and recognizing their accomplishments (both big and small) may be all the motivation they require to succeed. Let them know you appreciate all their effort and hard work. Make sure to celebrate effort over outcome to show your child that trying is the most important thing. Some great wins to celebrate include solving a tricky problem, reaching a reading or math goal, or finishing a project or assignment. Let them know you are proud of them and that they should be proud of themselves as well. They'll be eager to advance if you sometimes throw in a special treat or outing!

4. Find additional help when needed

Perhaps one of the biggest lessons for students to learn is not be afraid to ask for help when needed. However, as a parent, sometimes we don't have the knowledge or ability to provide the help they need when it comes to schooling. That's when it's important to seek additional help, such as a tutor. Tutors can provide professional, tailored help to students, whether it is with an entire subject or a concept within a subject. Tutors can help your child succeed in school, while giving you peace of mind that they are learning with a professional.

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) has teamed up with the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka to launch the Y Achieve Tutoring program. This program provides free tutoring sessions outside of school hours, free of charge for any students who may be struggling. These sessions are open to students from Grades 6 to 12 attending a school within the SCDSB, whether you have a YMCA membership or not. For more information, or to book a session online, please visit www.ymcasm.ca/tutoring or contact morgan.gillies@sm.ymca.ca.

Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka