



## Algonquin Ridge Elementary School

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**Cory McKeown**  
Principal

**K. Moffitt**  
Vice-Principal

### ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS NOVEMBER 2023

#### PRINCIPAL'S MESSAGE

A school year begins with a great deal of hustle and bustle as families and staff scramble to get back into their school year routines. The excitement, and no small amount of anxiety, soon give way to the steady waves of urgent needs that come and go with each passing week. Completing school forms, ordering lunches, packing indoor shoes, team tryouts, the inevitable homework and studying, coupled with other school events like the Terry Fox Run, Remembrance Day Assemblies, picture days, Halloween, and field trips keep us all hopping from one priority to another—not to mention trying to balance home activities like dance or sports teams or music lessons etc.. And now we find ourselves only 6 weeks from the Winter Break with Progress Reports already in hand and Family/Teacher conferences scheduled this week. As hectic as things can sometimes seem, all the effort and occasional inconvenience are soon forgotten when students are able to wake up each morning excited for something that is coming up at school. The staff, with the support of your School Council and other volunteers, are always looking ahead to plan the next great opportunity for our school and community...so don't expect things to slow down ever really! Just hold on and enjoy the ride. Do not let this phase of yours and your children's lives slip past unnoticed while you are busy looking ahead to what's next.

We look forward to seeing as many families as possible visit us at school for student progress conferences and then again at the Winter Fair (if you missed last year, you missed an incredible event hosted by Council and supported by many—7!).

The following list offers only a snapshot of some of the many exciting things that have happened or that are ongoing at Algonquin Ridge so far this year.

- Art Club
- A-Team/Safety Patroller/Student Leadership
- Terry Fox Day (community run. Jr. Int/yard run primary)
- picture day, re-take day and class photo day
- Jr. Girls and Jr. Boys Volleyball
- library helpers, primary classroom helpers and classroom 'buddy program' (partnered older/younger class for organized activities)
- after school tutoring sessions in the library
- ARES Night at the Barrie Colts
- ARES Raise the Dough night with Dominos
- Cross-Country season with over 25athletes qualifying for and competing at the County Championships (jr/int)
- ARES 1<sup>st</sup> ever Primary Cross-Country meet at Education Centre
- Remembrance Day assembly (gr. 1-6), Kinder assembly and intermediate student walking trip to the Barrie Military Heritage Park
- Terry Fox Day Community Run/Yard Run for primary
- community walks/field trips
- School Council in-person meetings in Sept. and Oct.
- lunch program with 3 offerings (pizza, pasta, subs)—Harvey's coming soon!
- nutrition/snack program for students in need
- Meet the Educator/Open House in September
- Intermediate Flag Football
- Int Girls Basketball and Int Boys Volleyball seasons now underway
- Book Fair continues through Thursday evening during interviews
- Character Assemblies (by division) returning soon
- Community of Us Club & Chess Club underway
- Rotary Club of Barrie Book Day (gr. 2)
- Scanlon Creek outdoor education visit (gr. 4)
- Public Health Immunizations (gr. 7/8)
- Fort Willow Field Trip (intermediate)

Cory McKeown Principal  
Algonquin Ridge Elementary School  
705 737-4080 x 20304  
Pronouns: He/His/Him

## CALENDAR

Nov 13-17<sup>th</sup> – Book Fair  
Nov 14<sup>th</sup> – Photo Retake Day  
Nov 15<sup>th</sup> - Int GBBall Mini @ ARES  
Nov 16<sup>th</sup> – Student Led Conferences after school.  
Nov 17<sup>th</sup> – PA Day – no school – Student Led conferences.  
Nov 21<sup>st</sup> – Int BVBall vs Mapleview  
Nov 22<sup>nd</sup> – Int BVBall zones pm  
                    Int G Bball zones pm  
Nov 23<sup>rd</sup> – Grade 6 to Hockey Hall of Fame  
Nov 29<sup>th</sup> – Int BVball and GBBall Regionals  
Nov 30<sup>th</sup> – Spirit Day – All about my faves day  
Dec 5<sup>th</sup> – Int GBBall and Int BVBall Countie  
Dec 22<sup>nd</sup> – Last day of school – Hat or Scarf Day  
Dec 25<sup>th</sup> – Jan 7<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Break  
Jan 8<sup>th</sup> – School Reopens

## DAYS OF AWARENESS November 2023

Nov. 7th - Inuit Day (Indigenous World View)  
Nov. 11th - Remembrance Day  
Nov. 12th - Bandi Chhor Divas (Sikhism)  
Diwali/Deepavali - five-day festival (Hinduism)  
Nov. 12th-18th - Transgender Awareness Week  
Nov. 13th- Diwali/Lord Mahavir Nirvana (Jainism)  
New Year/Enlightenment Day of Gautamswami (Jainism)  
Vikram Samvat New Year (Hinduism)  
World Kindness Day  
Nov. 16th - International Day for Tolerance  
Louis Riel Day (Indigenous World View)  
Nov. 18th - Gyan Panchami (Jainism)  
Nov. 19th-25th - Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week  
Nov. 20th - National Child/World Children's Day  
Transgender Day of Remembrance  
Nov. 20th-26th - Canada History Week  
Nov. 24th - Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadur (Sikhism)  
Nov. 25th - Holodomor Memorial Day  
International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women  
Nov. 25th-26th - Day of the Covenant (Bahai)  
Nov. 25th-Dec. 10th - The 16 Days of Activism Against Gender-Based Violence  
Nov. 26th- Dev Diwali (Jainism)  
Nov. 27th - Birth of Guru Nanak Jayanti (Sikhism)  
Nov. 27th-28th - Ascension of Abdul-Baha (Bahai)

## NOVEMBER PA DAY

Please note that Friday, Nov. 17 is a PA Day for all SCDSB students. Please refer to the 2023-24 School Year Calendar on the SCDSB website for more information: [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/school\\_year\\_calendar](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/school_year_calendar). Below is a summary of the activities planned for Elementary for the Nov. 17 PA Day:

<b>Length:</b>	Full-day parent/guardian-student-teacher conferences
<b>Topic:</b>	Communication to parents/guardians about student progress through parent/guardian-student-teacher conferences
<b>Host:</b>	Simcoe County District School Board elementary schools, including Grades 7 and 8 in Grade 7-12 secondary schools
<b>Presenter(s)/facilitator(s):</b>	Elementary educators

Elementary educators will meet with students and parents/guardians to discuss student progress thus far this school year, including areas of strengths and next steps for improvement.

### PARENTS' GUIDE TO ASSESSMENT, EVALUATION AND REPORTING

Learn to navigate the world of assessment, evaluation, and reporting with this new guide for parents/guardians. Created to support parents'/guardians' understanding of assessment, this guide was designed to effectively empower you to actively engage in your child's educational journey. The guide has been posted to the Simcoe County District School Board's website and can be accessed at <https://tinyurl.com/2urcm2tm>.

### SUBSCRIBE TO KINDERGARTEN CONNECTIONS!

Will your child be turning four in 2024? If so, the SCDSB invites you to Kindergarten Connections! This is a monthly newsletter informing families of everything they need to know about preparing their child for school, as well as registering them for Kindergarten in the SCDSB. To learn more and subscribe, visit the Kindergarten page on the SCDSB website: [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/kindergarten](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/kindergarten).

### EARLYON CHILD AND FAMILY CENTRES

The foundation for lifelong learning and health is built in the early years. EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Simcoe County offer programs for children prenatal to six years of age and their parents/guardians and caregivers. They offer access to play- and inquiry-based learning supported by *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's pedagogy for the early years, information on child development and developmental screening including Early Referral Identification Kits (ERIKs), parent/guardian education, referrals to community resources, nutrition information, and post-natal resources. Check with your local EarlyON provider: <https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe>

### HOW IS YOUR INFANT, TODDLER, OR PRESCHOOL CHILD DEVELOPING?

Is your child meeting their milestones? Age-appropriate speech and language skills are critical to your child's ability to read, write, and be successful in school as well as to their ability to engage with their peers. Free services are available to support you with your child's development. Preschool speech and language programs are located across the County of Simcoe. Call (705) 739-5696 or 1-800-675-1979 to complete a developmental screen. The earlier we work together the better!

### LICENSED WINTER BREAK SCHOOL-AGE CHILDCARE PROGRAMS

Childcare programs for children in Kindergarten to Grade 6 are provided by independent, third-party childcare operators in some SCDSB schools. To support your childcare needs, some operators offer childcare on PA days and holidays including over the Winter Break. Registration in advance is required.

Please contact the childcare operator directly to discuss fees and to register. More information and contact numbers can be found by visiting: [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning\\_for\\_school/childcare\\_before\\_after](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after).

### 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 at [www.scdsb.on.ca/secondary/planning\\_for\\_high\\_school](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/secondary/planning_for_high_school) to find details on your high school's info night and contact the school directly for more information.

### LOOKING FOR EMPLOYMENT? JOIN OUR TEAM!

Curious about what employment opportunities are available at the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB)? The SCDSB is hosting several job fairs throughout Simcoe County during the month of November; come by and speak with

Wednesday, Nov. 22, 2023

12 to 5 p.m.

Employment Services - Agilec For more information about employment opportunities at the SCDSB, visit: [www.scdsb.on.ca/joinourteam](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/joinourteam).

### NOV. 28 IS EAT WELL TO EXCEL DAY IN SIMCOE COUNTY

**Eat Well to Excel** is a Simcoe County non-profit community partnership that supports our school's student nutrition program. The funding provided by Eat Well to Excel allows us to supply students with access to healthy snacks during the school day. The pandemic and increasing food costs have caused a significant financial strain on many families in our region and new data shows that 1 in 3 kids in Canada are at risk of going to school hungry. Kids that are hungry struggle to retain knowledge and keep focused throughout the day. They are also at an increased risk of experiencing poor mental health and a compromised immune system. With your support we can maintain and hopefully improve our program to provide a consistent supply of healthy food to our students. You can make a donation by visiting [eatwelltoexcel.ca](http://eatwelltoexcel.ca). You can either support the county-wide program or direct your donation to our school. Please include our school name in the comment box to ensure the donation goes directly to our program. A tax receipt will be emailed to you. For more information about Eat Well to Excel visit [eatwelltoexcel.ca](http://eatwelltoexcel.ca).

### KNOWLEDGEHOOK MATH TOOL

Knowledgehook is a digital math assessment and practice tool that has been purchased for all K-10 SCDSB classrooms. This tool is accessible to students at home so that they can practice math skills, either assigned by their teacher or on their own. Ask your child about how they use Knowledgehook in class and learn more at: [www.knowledgehook.com](http://www.knowledgehook.com).

### SUPPORTING ORAL LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT AT HOME

Within the revised language curriculum, there is a focus on supporting students to acquire the knowledge and skills relating to the foundations of language. Oral and non-verbal communication are foundational components of language skills. Over the years, students develop their listening and speaking abilities using a variety of strategies and skills, including word choice and syntax, to become effective communicators.

Here are some ways you can support oral language development at home:

- Engage your child in conversations about things that interest them
- Talk to your child and listen responsively
- Ask and answer questions
- Share oral stories
- Read aloud to your child
- Talk about the books you read together
- Singing and playing together

### DENTAL SCREENING AND SERVICES FOR KIDS AGES 0-17

Good dental health is an important part of your child's general health. The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit's Oral Health Community Program offers free dental screenings in daycares, schools, and health unit offices for children and youth aged 0 - 17 years. Dental screening can identify and inform families that their child has a dental concern. Health unit staff can also help children/youth and their families access free preventive services and treatment through the Healthy Smiles Ontario (HSO) Program. For more information regarding these services visit: [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/Dental](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/Dental).

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*

## MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION STRATEGY OF THE MONTH

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 *Let It Go*. This practice helps students focus their attention, calm feelings of anxiety, and manage stress. To practice *Let It Go* at home, have your child/youth sit comfortably and take a deep breath. Share the following exercise with your child/youth:

- Use your fingers to gently massage the top of your head.
- Still in massaging motion, bring your fingers to your forehead, eyebrows, temples, around your eyes, cheeks, and jaw.
- If you notice tension anywhere – let it go.
- Finally, massage each of your ears and end by gently pulling your earlobes.

Keep in mind to take your time with each area, especially where you hold the most tension.

Practicing *Let It Go* can be done any time of the day or at regular times, such as at mealtime or before bed. You may try this technique on your hands using a massaging motion to focus on each finger, thumb, and palm. Consider doing *Let It Go* with your child/youth to model the strategy.

Visit the links below for *Let It Go* posters from School Mental Health Ontario:

Elementary - <https://smho-smso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/SEL-Posters-Let-It-Go.pdf>

Secondary - <https://smho-smso.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/SEL-Posters-Secondary-Let-It-Go.pdf>

Find more easy and fun mental health activities to do at home visit: <https://smho-smso.ca/online-resources/easy-and-fun-mental-health-activities-for-home/>

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

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

## SCHOOL BUS TRANSPORTATION INFORMATION AVAILABLE FROM THE SCSTC

In order to receive delay and cancellation notifications, families can check the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC) website at [www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) or download the 'BusPlanner Delays' app from the Apple or Android app stores to receive delay notifications to their devices. Users would need to select Simcoe County STC as the transportation authority. The app will need to be forced closed, but you will be able to select your student(s) routes or school to receive delays.

The app will send a general notice for any cancellation in Simcoe County. You only need to know which 'zone' you're in, so you would know which one to look out for in the app. You can find your student's zone by visiting the School Bus Status page at [www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) and clicking the dropdown for the area you live in.

### 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 broader school communities.

There are eight webinars in the learning series specifically planned for parents/guardians and other caregivers during this school year.

Nov. 30, 2023	Helping parents align
Jan. 11, 2024	Sleep hygiene
Feb. 8, 2024	Self-regulation for kids
Feb. 22, 2024	Self-regulation for teens
Mar. 28, 2024	Building parents' resiliency
Apr. 18, 2024	Vaping, weed, and alcohol

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/3jqac74>.

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, Pine River Institute 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 Pine River Institute by visiting their website at [www.pineriverinstitute.com](http://www.pineriverinstitute.com).

### REVISED 2023 ONTARIO LANGUAGE CURRICULUM

Beginning this school year, all language programs for grades 1-8 will be based on the expectations of the revised Ontario language curriculum. The Ontario Curriculum, grades 1 to 8: Language, 2023 outlines the knowledge and skills required for effective reading and writing, listening, and speaking. so that students can succeed at school and beyond. The curriculum has been revised partly in response to the recommendations outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Commission's Right to Read Public Inquiry Report.

The 2023 curriculum now includes four strands: literacy connections and applications:

1. foundations of language
2. comprehension: understanding and responding to texts.
3. composition: expressing ideas and creating texts.

For more information, visit [www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/key-changes-language](http://www.dcp.edu.gov.on.ca/en/key-changes-language) to view a guide for parents/guardians on the Ministry of Education website.