



## Algonquin Ridge Elementary School

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**Cory McKeown**  
Principal

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### ALGONQUIN RIDGE NEWS SEPTEMBER 2022

#### **Character attribute for the month of September**

Caring - we show kindness towards each other.

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

##### **WELCOME BACK!**

We are now several days into our new school year and the students have adjusted well to their return to routine. The staff are thrilled to be seeing their faces and are very excited about what feels like a cautious return to 'normal'. It has been great to see cross-country runners circling the building in the morning, hopeful flag-football players on the field after school, and the excitement about upcoming volleyball and basketball tryouts. The next traditional Algonquin Ridge event will be a Meet the Teacher/Educator open house where families are invited to drop in for an informal opportunity to see their children's classroom(s) and meet the staff. Further details will be shared once they are finalized but you should mark your calendars for Thursday Sept. 29<sup>th</sup> between 6 and 7 p.m. This evening is not meant to provide a time for an in-depth conversation with your child's teacher about progress or challenges to this point. Teachers will be open to arranging a more appropriate time and place for a private conversation--meeting or phone-call.

For families new to Algonquin Ridge (including all of our newest JK students!) or for those who need to refresh their memories after a busy summer, the remainder of this message will focus on information that has been shared in the past. Schools and children thrive on routine, and we rely on our routines to ensure that our school is a safe and welcoming place. Remember that our school, with over 500 students and many more parents, guardians and caregivers, staff and visitors, needs consistency to operate. To achieve this consistency, we rely on our partners at home to know and observe the school routines. With that in we ask that you read and adhere to the following list of reminders that will help us maintain a safe and effective school. Please:

-say good-bye to your child at the gate each morning--we do not allow parents/caregivers/guardians on the school yard (JK/SK caregivers only are permitted to pick up at the classroom door between 3:20 and 3:30)

-morning supervision begins at 8:55 with a warning bell at 9:09 and entry bell at 9:10 (you may see children on the yard before that who are supervised by SEEDS daycare staff).

-please avoid the need to sign your children out of school or deliver items mid-day—we frequently have only one person in the office and student needs will take precedence over answering a phone or doorbell. When possible, you should communicate with the homeroom teacher in advance so that the student can be in the office, ready to be picked up at a pre-determined time.

Please take a moment to review the routines for our parking lot/KISS-N-RIDE lane. You will also find important information about our School Council, fundraising and lunch/food sales.

***Karen Moffitt & Cory McKeown***  
***Administration***

#### CALENDAR

Sept 22 – Grade 7/8 – Hep B, Meningitis and HPV immunizations

Sept 23 – School Terry Fox Run

Sept 26 – PA day – **no school for students**

Sept 29 – Meet the Teacher- 6-7pm

Oct 10 – Thanksgiving – **school closed**

Oct 12 – Regional Cross Country

Oct 19 – County Cross Country

Oct 20 – Football Regionals

Oct 20 - School Photo Day

Oct 24 – PA Day – **no school for students**

### KISS-N-RIDE/PARKING LOT

Thank you once again to the students and families that are choosing to ride or walk (even part of the way) to school. Your help with reducing traffic by using the road in front of the school to drop off older students or parking a few blocks away from the school is appreciated (you may not leave your car in a no-parking zone to walk your child to their gate. City of Barrie By-law enforcement officers visit our school frequently and will write tickets for cars left unattended). We recognize that driving your child (ren) to school is sometimes unavoidable and that **the families of our youngest students are most in need of the limited space we have on the school property**. Over the first 2 weeks of school, we have noticed a significant drop in traffic around entry and dismissal times—thank you for your help!

For those who are entering our school parking lot in their personal vehicle we offer these important reminders:

#### **DO'S**

- drive slowly in the school lot and in surrounding 40 km zones
- **obey staff directions** - recognize that accessing the school lot during entry and dismissal is a privilege and not a right
- pull all the way forward when dropping off students in the Kiss-N-Ride!**
- unload children from the curbside and **do not leave your car**
- consider dropping off a few blocks from school or on an alternate street and allow students to walk from there**
- remember that pedestrians have the right of way
- recognize that parents of our youngest students have a greater need to access the school parking and Kiss-N-Ride**
- be hyper-aware of student pedestrians at all times
- be patient if you are choosing to drive into the school parking lot (the busy period is over in less than 10 min)
- have students walk/wheel to school whenever possible**
- park in designated spots only
- have your child fully ready to go when you get in your car
- park in a designated space if you plan to leave your vehicle**
- pedestrians at the front need to cross to the school by the flag post and not cut across the entry/exit lanes
- school vehicles should be given the right of way
- the lane across the front of the school is closed at entry and dismissal

#### **DO NOT'S**

- do not block school vehicles (buses and vans)
- do not pull through pylons, that close the bus lane directly in front of the school, until after the school day has begun in the a.m. or until buses have departed in the p.m.
- do not unload students where they will need to cross the parking lot and live lanes unattended
- do not double park/park in non-spaces
- do not leave your vehicle unattended unless in a designated parking space**
- do not use your cell phone while driving
- do not block or park in posted fire routes
- do not interfere with the staff's efforts to monitor students and traffic to ensure safety
- do not distract staff who are monitoring student entry and dismissal

The Kiss-N-Ride is for only a very brief 'stop and drop'. If you need to leave your vehicle to assist your child or walk them to their gate, please park in a designated space. If there are no spots available, then drive away from the school until you can find a legal parking space. The staff here often face the same parking challenges that you do. Blocking lanes, double parking or parking in fire routes is not an option. Be aware that City of Barrie Bylaw officers have written tickets on our property and will continue to do so. Students, administration, the staff, School Council, and your neighbours thank you for your continued efforts to ensure students can come and go from school safely. Please recognize that student safety is our top priority, even when it may mean a momentary inconvenience for parents and caregivers. Remember that children do not always obey the 'rules of the road' or 'look before they leap' and, therefore, all adults are responsible for being extra diligent when driving to, from or around our busy school. Also be aware that a return to extra-curricular activities means that we will have additional visitors to our school on days when school teams are playing games after school.

### SCDSB SCHOOLS ARE MASK-FRIENDLY ENVIRONMENTS

Students from Kindergarten to Grade 12, staff and visitors are not required to wear masks in schools, school board offices and on student transportation. SCDSB schools will continue to be mask-friendly environments. Masks will be available to students and staff who choose to continue to wear them while in schools. Please encourage your child(ren) to be respectful and understanding of everyone's choice with respect to masking so that SCDSB schools remain the safe, inclusive and welcoming teaching and learning environments they are meant to be for all.

For more information visit the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit website at [simcoemuskokahealth.ca](https://www.simcoemuskokahealth.ca).

### SELF-ASSESSMENT

All students and staff are encouraged to complete the daily COVID-19 self-assessment screening tool prior to entering SCDSB schools and buildings and follow the direction of the screening tool. The COVID-19 self-assessment screening tool can be accessed here: [COVID-19 school and child care screening tool](#).

### SPECIAL EDUCATION UPDATE

Individual Education Plans (IEP) are being developed for the 2022-2023 school year. Consultation forms have been sent home for families to have their input in the development of the plan.

Look for news regarding Gifted Screening nominations and receiving IEPs in the October newsletter.

Thanks,  
SERT Team

### KEEP CONNECTED WITH OUR SCHOOL AND WITH THE SCDSB

It's important to get accurate information about what's going on at our school and at the 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).

For school bus transportation information, visit the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium's website at [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). Also, remember to bookmark the school bus information page at [simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) for bus delay and cancellation information on inclement weather days.

### SCHOOL BUS 'BUS TAG' PROGRAM HELPS STUDENTS GET TO AND FROM SCHOOL SAFELY

The Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium's Bus Tag program supports safety for JK/SK and other school-identified students. The program helps match students to their assigned afternoon school bus and identifies that they must be met by a parent/guardian at their afternoon bus stop.

The program provides a colour coded bus tag with the assigned p.m. route number, to be attached to the student's backpack, and a colour-coded route card with route number in the windows of the school bus that the bus tag is matched to. The program can also provide tags for students who are walkers and/or who remain at an on-site childcare centre to make sure they don't get on a bus in error.

For more information, visit [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) and click on the 'Safety' tab.

### STUDENT DRESS CODE

Students are expected to respect the guidelines when dressing for school. Our school is a safe space. We work to be equitable and inclusive and understand that students may choose to express themselves through their clothing choices. Student clothing cannot pose a safety concern or conceal identity. Exceptions are granted to students who wear head coverings or other garments/objects for the purposes of religious observance, medical or sensory needs, or other reasons protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SCDSB dress code is available in the student agenda and online at [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/dress\\_code](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/dress_code). If you have questions about the dress code, you can contact your school principal.

### SCHOOL COUNCIL 2022/23 UPDATE

Please consider getting involved with the ARES School Council this year. The committee is made up of dedicated parents, staff and community members who work together to keep our school great. This advisory committee shares their ideas and input with the school staff, organizes and leads fund raising efforts, and contributes to the decisions made around how we use funds to enhance student life.

We are currently planning for a face-to-face **first School Council Meeting on Tuesday Sept. 27th at 6:30pm**. We will also hold our school council election at this meeting. Elected/voting members are expected to attend about 6-7 meetings per year which usually run about 2 hours. Non-elected parents are always welcome to attend meetings to learn about their school and often volunteer to assist with fund-raising efforts etc. We usually share meeting date reminders on our roadside sign, in our school Newsletters and on the school webpage.

We would also like to sincerely thank our 2021/22 School Council who remain in their current positions until our election takes place on the 27<sup>th</sup>. We hope to see you all back again this year!

**To be eligible to hold an elected position (chair or co-chair, treasurer, secretary, community representative, member at large) you will need to call the office and we will email you a nomination form to you. We can also send one home with your child upon request, or you may choose to pick one up before or after school from the office (not within 15 min of entry or dismissal).**

### SCHOOL COUNCIL NOMINATIONS FOR 2022-23 SCHOOL YEAR

School council is a committee made up of elected parents/guardians, community representatives, staff, and sometimes students that help to provide the community voice and parent/guardian perspective on important school topics. School council is a good way for parents/guardians to get involved in their child/children's education while playing an important role in the partnership between home and school.

School council nominations take place every fall. If you are interested, please watch your email for upcoming communication and for more information visit [www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/parent/school\\_councils](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/parent/school_councils).

## HOME SUPPORT FOR MATH LEARNERS

Are you looking for ideas on how to help your child achieve their best in math this year? The virtual workshops for parents/caregivers that were offered earlier this year have been recorded and are now available.

### **Making math connections @Home**

This session explored where we find numbers, patterns, measures, and shapes in our daily lives. Participants learned about practical ways to help their child notice and wonder about the math in their world. Visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWJ-aMzSlh4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sWJ-aMzSlh4) to watch the workshop.

### **Problem solving @Home**

This session explored how to encourage children to be active thinkers and problem solvers, both in math and around the house. Participants learned about how solving problems at home can help their children solve problems in math class. Visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFh-5t40XzM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SFh-5t40XzM) to watch the workshop.

### **Practicing math facts @Home**

This session explored practical, intentional, and fun ways to practice math facts at home. Participants left with ideas, games, and activities to support their child with becoming fluent with their math facts. Visit [www.youtube.com/watch?v=1F316gC1GaE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1F316gC1GaE) to watch the workshop.

Thanks for being an important part of your child's math education!

## WELCOMING VOLUNTEERS BACK TO SCHOOL FOR 2022-23

Volunteers are an important part of what makes our schools great places to learn and grow. The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is pleased to welcome back volunteers in our schools for the 2022-23 school year. Volunteers can fill various roles at our schools including school council members, hot lunch organizers, field trip supervisors, and classroom helpers. The requirements for all volunteers prior to starting/returning to your school of choice in September are as follows:

Volunteers must:

- Agree to submit a copy of a Vulnerable Sector Check (VSC) executed within the last six months and register and complete all required steps through the [SCDSB Community Apps](#) link (see image below) prior to beginning volunteer duties.

### How to access the Volunteer Portal

Click this [SCDSB Community Apps](#) link or find the link on the volunteer page of your schools website, under the Parents menu.

If you have previously registered a Community Account, click the **Login To Community Apps** button, and login with your username and password.

If you do **not** have an account, click the **New? Register for new Community Account** link at the bottom of the page.



REMINDER: Each volunteer will have to have their own community apps account. Each community apps account is created with a separate email address.

- Complete an annual offence declaration through the SCDSB Community Apps – Volunteers page for up to four years to continue volunteering.
- Submit a new VSC at the beginning of the fifth year.
- Be responsible for the cost of the VSC.
- Be responsible to the principal and work under the supervision of teaching staff.
- Work co-operatively as part of a team to support and supplement school programs.
- Respect the confidentiality of the relationship to the school, ensuring that staff issues and student work and behaviour issues are held in confidence.
- Adhere to established SCDSB and school procedures.
- Communicate regularly with staff.
- Complete the COVID-19 screening tool prior to each school visit.
- Be prompt, dependable and regular in attendance, and give advance notice to teachers when unable to attend.

## PROCEDURES HELP KEEP OUR SCHOOL SAFE

We have a number of procedures in place to keep our school safe. You can help your child understand and feel safe by:

- talking to them about the situations below
- reminding them that emergencies are rare
- telling them it's important to follow staff instructions in these situations

Parents/guardians should talk about the following emergency drills with their children:

- **Shelter in place** is used when there is an environmental or weather-related situation, like a chemical spill outside the building, or a major storm. Activities continue inside the school. Students and staff are not allowed to leave the building. The ventilation system may be shut off temporarily.
- A **hold and secure** is used when there is a situation in the community, not related to the school, like a bank robbery nearby. Activities continue, but all exterior doors are locked. No one is allowed to enter or exit the school.
- A **lockdown** is used when there is a major incident, or a threat of violence related to the school. Students and staff move to secure areas, away from doors and windows. Interior doors are locked, lights are shut off and blinds are drawn. Students and staff remain quiet. We practice lockdown drills at least two times per year. In the unlikely event of an actual lockdown situation, police ask that parents/guardians do not go to the school. Information will be communicated through the school board social media sites ([www.facebook.com/SCDSB](https://www.facebook.com/SCDSB) and [www.twitter.com/SCDSB\\_Schools](https://www.twitter.com/SCDSB_Schools)) and website ([www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca)), through local police and local media.
- All schools have **evacuation plans** in case of gas leaks, bomb threats or fire incidents that would require everyone to leave the school. We hold drills to practice our evacuation plan. In a real evacuation, students and staff may go to the evacuation site, depending on the situation. Parents/guardians will be informed about pick-up procedures by the school, school board and local media.

When parents/guardians are at school during a drill or emergency event, they must follow direction from school staff, police, fire, and/or emergency personnel. Parents/guardians may not have immediate access to their children during drills or emergencies. They may need to wait until the situation is resolved and school staff and/or emergency personnel release students into parent/guardian care.

It's important for you to know we'll always take whatever precautions are necessary to keep our school and students safe.

Please note the following:

- Elementary school main doors are locked during the school day. Visitors must use the **intercom system** and wait for assistance. **Staff may not be available to answer the door immediately, so please be patient.**
- Staff must complete a **criminal record check** before having contact with students.
- We ask parents/guardians to contact us when their child will be absent from school as part of our **safe arrival** program. When we don't hear from a parent/guardian and a student is absent, we will call home to find out the reason for the absence.
- At least two staff members in every school are trained in **first aid and CPR**. All SCDSB schools have **automated external defibrillators (AEDs)**.

## 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.

Oct. 20, 2022	Screen Time 2.0
Dec. 8, 2022	How to Manage Another's Anxiety
Feb. 9, 2023	Guide to Attuned Limit Setting
Mar 2, 2023	Emotional Regulation for Kids and Adults
Apr 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).

## DAYS OF AWARENESS/HERITAGE DAYS

### **SEPTEMBER**

Childhood Cancer Awareness Month  
Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Month  
Sept 21 – International Day of Peace  
Sept 21 – National Tree Day  
Sept 23 – Terry Fox National School Run day  
Sept 25 – Franco-Ontarian Day  
Sept 26-30 – National Reconciliation week  
Sept 28 – Rowan’s Law Day  
Sept 30 – National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Indigenous World View  
Sept 30 – Orange Shirt Day – Canadian Observance – Indigenous World View

## HOLY DAYS AND HOLIDAYS IN MAY

Sept 17 - Arba'een, Islam  
Sept 19 -Powley Day - Indigenous World View  
Sept 21 – Festival of Higan-e – Buddhism  
Sept 22 – Eihei Dogen Kigen Memorial – Buddhism  
Sept 22 – Harvestide/Mabon/Fall Equinox (may be observed Sept 21/20 – Wicca  
Sept 25-27 – Rosh Hashanah – Judaism  
Sept 26 – Sharad Nvratri begins – Hinduism

## ROWAN’S LAW

Rowan’s Law was enacted in memory of Rowan Stringer, an Ontario student and high school rugby player who died as a result of concussion-related injuries. Ontario is the first province in Canada to enact concussion-related education. The Act designates an annual Rowan’s Law Day on the last Wednesday of September. This year, Rowan’s Law Day falls on Sept. 28.

## BRADFORD GREENHOUSES FUNDRAISER FOR ALGONQUIN RIDGE ELEMENTARY

Once again, our school has been selected to participate in the **Bradford Greenhouse Garden Gallery** fundraising program. It requires no extra purchases or signing up. You just simply make your regular purchases and when you are checking out, tell the cashier that you are with Algonquin Ridge Elementary, and they will do the rest! Friends, family members, neighbours, and co-workers can all participate! The program runs to **October 15, 2022**. At the end of the season, Bradford Greenhouses Garden Gallery will donate 5% of all the ARES purchases back to the school as a gift card. It’s that easy!

## FREE ACCESS TO COMMUNITY-BASED TUTORING FOR STUDENTS

For all students to achieve success, schools, families, and community partners must work collaboratively to increase access to resources, supports, and broader learning experiences. The SCDSB offers a wide variety of tutoring programs to support students and their families in accessing needed supports.

From Sept. 1 to Dec. 31, the SCDSB has funds available to cover costs associated with these tutoring services, when provided by a SCDSB-approved organization. SCDSB families accessing these services are not required to pay the service provider directly.

For a list of approved organizations and to learn more about how you can access these services, visit [scdsb.on.ca/elementary/tutoring\\_programs](https://scdsb.on.ca/elementary/tutoring_programs).