

November 2023

Days of Awareness 2023-24

Albanian Heritage Month

Hindu Heeritage Month

Financial Literacy Mnth

Movember

November 2	I Read Canadian Day
November 3	Grade 6's to SCI for Agriculture Day (pm)
November 3	School Colour Day
November 5	Yellow Monday
November 5	School Council Meeting 5:30 – 6:30 pm
November 8	National Indigenous Veterans Day
November 8-16	Book Fair
November 9	Progress Reports Go Home
November 10	Remembrance Day Assembly - Black, Red, White Day
November 11	Remembrance Day
November 12	Diwali
November 13	Picture Retake Day
November 13-17	Student Conference Week
November 14	Wye Marsh Visit – Grade 4's
November 17	PA Day
November 19-25	Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week
November 29	Pink Wednesday
November 30	Family Movie Night (6:00 – 8:00 pm)

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.

Below is a summary of the activities planned for the Nov. 17 PA Day:

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

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

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.

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 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 on PA days and holidays including over the Winter Break. 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 by visiting:

www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after.

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.

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

Nov. 9, 2023	Understanding and managing screen time, part two - social media edition
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
March 28, 2024	Building parents' resiliency
April 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/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.

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 one of our representatives at any of the following events!

YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka Employment Services (Midland)

Thursday, Nov. 2, 2023

9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

[Job Seekers | YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka \(ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca\)](http://ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca)

TRACKS Employment & Resource Service (Collingwood)

Thursday, Nov. 9, 2023

11 a.m. to 6 p.m.

[TRACKS Employment Services - One-stop resource centre for Employment Ontario Services | Located in](#)

[Collingwood and serving Georgian Triangle communities of Clearview, Wasaga Beach, and Town of the Blue Mountains](#)

FOCUS Employment Services (Alliston)

Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2023

3:30 to 6:30 p.m.

[Job Seekers - FOCUS Community Development Corporation \(focuscdc.on.ca\)](#)

Agilec Employment Services (Orillia)

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.

Grade 1 French Immersion information

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) offers French Immersion (FI) at select schools throughout Simcoe County beginning in Grade 1. The goal of the FI program is to enable students to communicate in French with a high level of proficiency, enabling them to function with ease in both French and English. Upon graduation from the program, students will communicate in French with confidence in a wide variety of real-life situations.

Grade 1 FI family information nights are held annually in advance of the application process for the following school year. This year, FI family information nights will be held in-person throughout the month of November at the respective FI school locations. The designated Grade 1 FI site for our school is Worsley Elementary School. The information night for this school will be 31 40th Street, Wasaga Beach, on Monday, November 20, 2023 from 6:00 – 8:00 pm.

The SCDSB board-wide electronic applications for the Grade 1 FI program for all sites will open Friday, Dec. 1 at 9 a.m. and close at 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 15. Entry into the FI program is determined through a digitally randomized lottery system.

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. 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.

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.

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

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.

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.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit