



Megan Francis
Principal

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Ken Wilson
Vice-Principal

BUS CANCELLATION/SCHOOL
CLOSURE: **CENTRAL SIMCOE**

MARCH 2024

March Holy Days, Holidays, and Days of Observance

- 1st - 31st – Bangladeshi Heritage Month
- Hellenic Heritage Month
- 4th–8th – Black Mental Health Week
- 8th – International Women’s Day
- 10th to Apr. 9th – Ramadan (Islam)
- 15th – International Day to Combat Islamophobia
- 17th – Irish Heritage Day
- 20th – French Language Day
- 20th – Naw-Ruz – Baha’i
- 21st – Nowruz (Ismaili) - Islam
- 21st – International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 21st – World Down Syndrome Day
- 22nd – World Water Day
- 23rd – 24th – Purim (Judaism)
- 25th – Holi (Hinduism)
- International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade
- 29th – Good Friday (Christianity)
- 30th – Earth Hour
- 31st – Easter (Christianity)
- International Transgender Day of Visibility

MARCH DATES

NO SCHOOL COUNCIL MEETING IN MARCH

- 5th – Area Chess Tournament @ Shanty Bay P.S.
- 8th – Comfy Cozy Day
- 10th - Daylight Savings Time begins
@ 2 AM, clocks move forward 1 hour
- 21st - World Down Syndrome Day
(wear your most eye-catching socks!)
- International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- 22nd – Dance-a-Thon
- 26th - Epilepsy Awareness Day (wear purple)
- 27th - Earth Hour (in schools)
- 21st - Grade 8 Grad Retakes

... and Some Future Dates

- Apr. 3rd & 4th – Caribou Contest
- Apr. 16th – Wendy’s Fundraiser Night – 4:00 – 7:00
- Apr. 23rd - School Council Meeting @ 6PM
- May 20th - Victoria Day Holiday
- May 30th – Welcome to Kindergarten – 4:00 – 5:00

PRINCIPAL’S MESSAGE

As we start to plan for next year, if you have a special request or comment that you want us to consider please email mfrancis@scdsb.on.ca and kiwilson@scdsb.on.ca for consideration by April 30th, 2024. We look at many factors when we make up class lists. It cannot always be about being in a class with friends or not in a split. Keep in mind that we have many dedicated staff who work diligently to meet the needs of students and place them in a supportive environment.

It is so important for students to get enough sleep and minimize the time spent on technology. Those seem to be two areas that impact student wellness, and we need your support in making sure students are well rested and ready to learn.

SPARE CLOTHING



Spring is just around the corner, and with that comes melting snow, ground thaw, rain, and all things wet and mucky! Over the past couple of weeks, we have had several students in the office, calling home for dry socks, shoes, rubber boots, clean pants etc. We would like to recommend that you send in spare clothing (particularly socks) with your child/ren in order to help us avoid numerous phone calls and interruptions to our day ... and yours!

COMMUNICATION REMINDER

Please call the main office if you are picking up a student early or there are changes to dismissal routines. Classroom staff are not always able to see and respond to Seesaw or email messages during the school day as they are teaching. We ask for your patience if you are picking up before regular dismissal time as this is a very busy time in the office.

SPRING CLEANING? FOUND JERSEYS?

Spring cleaning on your 'Things to Do' list for March Break? Maybe you'll come across a Forest Hill athletic jersey (or 2)! If you come across any, please send/drop off jerseys to the office. Thanks for searching!



Coaches and Administration

MARCH BREAK



March Break takes place from **Monday, March 11th to Friday, March 15th**.

School resumes on **Monday, March 18th**. We wish you and your family a very safe and enjoyable break!

School Council

There is no School Council meeting in March.

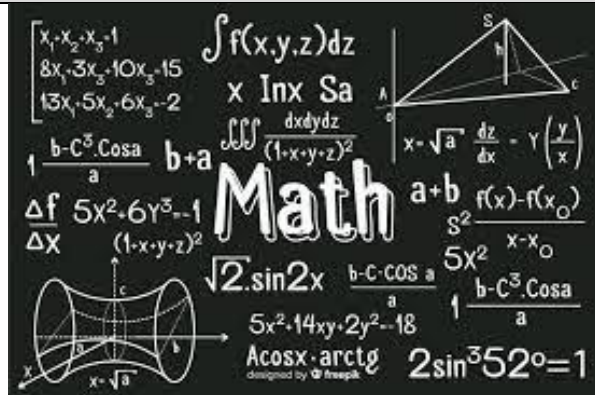
Please join us at our next School Council Zoom meeting on Tuesday, April 23rd at 6:00 p.m. in the Library.

Daylight Savings Time 2024



Daylight savings time begins this year at 2:00 a.m. on Sunday, March 10th, so remember to spring your clocks forward one hour!

Caribou Math Contest



The Caribou Math Contest is a world-wide online math contest that is held 6 times in the school year. Contests are offered for Grades 2, 3/4, 5/6, and 7/8. Contests have already been completed in October, November, January, and February.

The top 3 finishers for each group in the February contest were: Grade 2: Emma K., Ayla G., & Quinn I.; Grade 3/4: William K., Emmett P., Calli J., Nathan S., & Lila V.; Grade 5/6: Julia K., Walter S., & Wyatt G.; and Grade 7/8: Beau B., Bradey I., & Ella K.

The Caribou Cup is the series of ALL the Caribou Contests in one school year. Each student's ranking in the Caribou Cup is determined by their performance in their best 5 out of 6 contests through the school year. The Caribou Cup standings after 4 contests is: Grade 2: Emma K, Jericho M., & Liberty M.; Grade 3/4: Evelyn Mc., Benjamin H., & Oliver M.; Grade 5/6: Julia K., Johnny Q., & Aileigh T.; Grade 7/8: Alora L., Leah P., & Anthony E. There is no contest in March; the next Caribou Contest is April 3 & 4. Good luck, Thunderbirds!

EcoTeam Update

March is a time where we start thinking about going outdoors! We want to recognize the amazing resources we have in our environment and learn how we can respect and protect them!



On March 20th, our school will be acknowledging two important days: World Water Day and WWF Earth Hour. Our classes will be talking about how we can protect our water supply, and how we can reduce our energy use. You can participate at home too! Earth Hour is officially on Saturday, March 23rd from 8:30 - 9:30PM. Plan to turn off your lights, turn off your technology, and spend an hour playing "old school" with your kids!



Professor Jamz Dance-a-Thon



Who likes to dance?

We are going to dance the day away on Friday, March 22 at the annual Forest Hill dance-a-thon.

Students will be bringing home pledge forms to raise money for Athletics, Library, and a new sound system for the gym. We will be selling accessories such as mini glasses, slap bracelets, glowing hair braids, LED pop tubes and LED shoe clips. These will be available for pre-purchase on school cash online or can be purchased in person on the day of the event. All proceeds from these sales will go to the school as well. Children are encouraged to wear white on the day of the dance so that they will glow under the black light.

Music and Mabels

Our Co-curricular Orchestra is making great strides in their strings! We are very proud of the progress they are making in such a short time. Junior grades are mid-switch with



their instruments. Some have seen the Nuvo instruments, including Recorder+ come home this past week, some will see them next week.

Don't forget: the more they practice, the sooner any squeaks and squeals transform in to real and beautiful music. Practice is targeted and specific, ask your junior student what the practice focus for the week is.

Thank you to all who support the Mabels Labels fundraiser to help support 'the little things' that keep our program running on a daily basis. Bits and bobs do add up and taking advantage of the monthly specials at Mabel's Label's is a great way to help!

Don't forget to check the lost and found! It's starting to pile up again. Anything labelled can find its way home easily!

INTERMEDIATE GIRLS VOLLEYBALL TEAM

Congratulations to the Intermediate Girls Volleyball Team on a tremendous season so far!!



The girls placed first at both invitational tournaments at JOA and the Elmvale District High School tournament bringing home 2 beautiful Championship Banners to hang in our gym.

The team also placed first in their zones and first at the Regional Tournament. We wish the team great success at the County Tournament in Early March.

Congratulations to team members Alora, Spencer, Elisse, Tayler, Alexis, Georgia, Ali, Michaela, Caitlyn, Kiersten, Annabelle and Isla.

GO THUNDERBIRDS!!



SCDSB NEWS

March Break

Please note that March 11 to 15 is March Break 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.

April PA Day

Due to the solar eclipse set to occur in our region, the Simcoe County District School Board has made the decision to move the elementary school PA Day originally scheduled for April 26, 2024 to April 8, 2024.

Monday, April 8 is a PA Day for elementary 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 April 8 PA Day:

April 8, 2024

Length: Full-day

Topic: Curriculum content, student mental health and well-being, skilled trades and apprenticeships

Host: Simcoe County District School Board
Presenters/Facilitators: Combination of administrator-facilitated and self-directed learning modules planned by central staff

All educators will engage in professional learning with a focus on mental health promotion and literacy planning for students. Educators will learn about Wayfinder, a sequenced guide that offers a variety of mental health lessons and activities organized by grade. Included are core mental health literacy lessons, lessons linked to HPE curriculum, learning activities, and tools to support and consolidate student learning. Professional learning for grades 7 and 8 teachers will include a specific focus on the implementation of the

mandatory grade 7 and 8 mental health literacy modules. All educators will also learn about strategies to support students who are dysregulated in the regular classroom.

Kindergarten educators will work collaboratively to use the data from the early reading screener to determine and plan next steps for small group reading instruction. They will also explore the new Kindergarten Math Course of Study instruction and assessment resources and create plans for an upcoming topic of study that is responsive to the needs and interests of their students.

Grade 1 to 3 educators will learn about the revised Social Studies curriculum related to the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action and the United Nations Declaration of Indigenous Peoples. They will review the Indigenous Education Department online resources, learn about the Human Library available for all SCDSB teachers, and plan a cross-curricular literacy lesson which embeds the new social studies content. They will also engage in self-directed learning about math content knowledge for teaching planned by the district math team. This learning will focus on strategies for teaching number and algebra.

Grade 4 to 6 educators will analyze and use their classroom reading data to determine and plan next steps for literacy instruction. They will also engage in self-directed math content knowledge for teaching learning planned by the district math team. This learning will focus on strategies for teaching number and algebra.

Grade 7 and 8 educators will learn about each of the SCDSB programs offered to students which may lead to a career in the skilled trades including: OYAP, Co-operative Education, SHSM, SWAC, and Dual Credit. Educators will also engage in case studies on the topic of skilled trades pathways and then discuss in whole group sessions.

School administrators will facilitate this centrally planned learning experience. They will also engage in self-directed learning about math content knowledge for teaching planned by the district math team. This learning will focus on strategies for teaching number and algebra.

Collection and use of personal student information

As students progress from elementary school to secondary school, important personal student information which eases each student's transition to secondary school is shared. Sharing this information improves our ability to program effectively to benefit all students. The collection and use of personal student information for such purposes is authorized under the *Education Act*. Please note that all information used for the transition process is limited, secure, and protected at all times. Please contact Susan Sidlofsky, Superintendent of Education, if you would like more information about the transition process at Forest Hill Public School.

School climate survey

During the month of March, all students in Grades 4 to 12 will be asked to complete an anonymous and confidential online SCDSB School Climate Survey about their school experience. Participants will not be asked to provide their name or any other identifying information because all surveys are anonymous. The survey results will provide valuable feedback to staff related to the SCDSB Strategic Priorities.

Similar to prior SCDSB school climate surveys, the questions cover a range of topics, such as:

- excellence in teaching and learning;
- mental health and well-being;
- diversity, equity, and inclusion;
- community; and,
- experiences of school safety and bullying.

Student survey

A sample version of the student survey is available on the SCDSB website. The online survey is completed while students are at school and takes 15 minutes or less to complete.

We understand that some students in the SCDSB may not be able to complete their school climate survey on their own and may require the help of staff. A modified version of the survey is available for students who require this assistance to complete their survey.

Questions?

School staff will be available to answer any questions or concerns a student may have. Questions about the 2023-24 SCDSB School Climate Survey can also be directed to schoolclimate@scdsb.on.ca.

The information that is collected will be used to help guide our schools in creating and maintaining safe and supportive learning environments for all students. Thank you for your support!

Subscribe to Community Connects

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is excited to launch Community Connects, a new bimonthly newsletter for the SCDSB community. Our shared goal with this new tool is to keep our community partners and stakeholders informed while nurturing relationships that are built on accountability, trust, and transparency. To learn more and subscribe, visit the Community Connects page on the SCDSB website:

www.scdsb.on.ca/community/community_connects.

Kindergarten registration for September 2024 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 2024? If so, we invite you to register your child for Kindergarten. To register

online or for more information visit:
www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten.

Child care programs available on PA days, holidays, and March Break

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 March Break (March 11 to 15). Registration in advance is required. Please contact the child care operator directly to discuss fees and to register. For more information and contact numbers, please visit: www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after.

Is your child starting JK or SK in September?

The Simcoe County EarlyON Child and Family Centres are excited to offer in-person and virtual programs that help prepare children and parents for Kindergarten. Parents/guardians and children will have the opportunity to interact together in a variety of school readiness activities.

These programs will look at and discuss: How Does Learning Happen, Self Regulation, Social Skills, and How to Get Ready to Start School. To register for a program in your area visit: www.earlyonsimcoenorth.ca/GRFK.

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. The remaining webinars are:

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.

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 information series

During the 2023-24 school year, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is hosting virtual special education outreach sessions to assist parents/guardians in learning more about programs, supports, and ways that we work together to support students with special education needs.

Reading strategies

March 19

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Supporting students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

April 16

6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Every day mental health strategies

May 14

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:

www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/special_education/special_education_outreach_sessions.

Registration now open for summer eLearning!

Create flexibility in your timetable and earn a credit! The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school eLearning courses in July 2024 for current high school students or adult learners who are interested in creating flexibility in their schedule, earning a new credit, or upgrading a previous mark. Students can advance online learning skills, earn missed credits, or fast-track preparation for graduation or post-secondary in just four weeks.

Summer school program details can be found on the Learning Centres website at www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer_school.

The SCDSB also supports secondary students in participating in a variety of EDUTravel credit programs in July and August. EDUTravel programs are offered in a variety of destinations including Canada, USA, and Europe. For more information including costs, destinations, credits, and dates of commitment, visit: www.edutravelforcredit.com.

Grade 8 students – register now for summer eLearning!

Earn a reach-ahead credit with summer eLearning in the SCDSB! The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school eLearning courses in July 2024. Current Grade 8 students are invited to complete a reach-ahead credit, creating flexibility in their high school timetables!

For summer 2024, courses available to students entering Grade 9 are:

- CGC1D - Issues in Canadian Geography
- PAF10 - Healthy Living and Personal Fitness Activities
- CHC2D - Grade 10 Academic - Canadian History since WWI
- CHC2P - Grade 10 Applied - Canadian History since WWI
- CHV20/GLC20 – Civics/Careers

eLearning is fully supported by certified teachers who are available electronically daily. Summer school program details can be found on the Learning Centres website at

www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer_school.

Looking for ways to support your child in learning math? Check out the SCDSB's new Math at Home resource!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is committed to supporting students in understanding and doing mathematics. The SCDSB has developed the Math at Home resource, a compilation of family-friendly, accessible, and engaging math resources and tools designed to engage families in supporting their children's learning.

The Math at Home page on the SCDSB website, available at www.scdsb.on.ca/MathAtHome, includes a variety of math games, number talks, problem solving opportunities, and practice

tasks for students from pre-Kindergarten to Grade 10. Families will learn about how to support the development of positive math mindsets in their children and discover activities with connections to math in the world. The resource also includes a variety of print and digital resources for students and their families.

Math @Home parent and caregiver series

It's back! The SCDSB math team is pleased to offer virtual sessions for parents and caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions focus on practical and fun ways to support children with their mathematics learning and engagement at home. The first 200 registrants will receive a Math @Home kit of resources to use at home. Participants must pre-register for each of the sessions.

Games to support your child's math learning @Home

Thursday, April 4, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents, caregivers, and their children.

Playing games at home is a great way to support child(ren)'s math development. In this session, several games will be explored, and participants will have the opportunity to try the games with their children during the session.

The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length followed by 15 additional minutes for further game play or to ask questions of our math facilitators. Bring your child(ren) and your math kit to this session!

Participants must pre-register. Registered participants will receive a kit of hands-on resources that will be sent to the school indicated on the registration form. Use this link to register:

<https://bit.ly/24MathAtHome>. If you couldn't attend the previous sessions, visit the Math at Home page on the SCDSB

website to view past sessions:
www.scdsb.on.ca/MathAtHome.

Engaging in literacy during March Break

Local libraries offer many fun and engaging activities for families during March Break.

Visit

www.simcoe.ca/lists/locations/libraries.aspx

for a list of libraries in Simcoe County. You will find a link to access each library's website to view their upcoming events. The Barrie Public Library is offering a puppet show at their downtown location. Make sure to check out what your local library has to offer during March Break!

March cyber awareness topic: backup your data

Why does backing up your data matter?

Data loss can happen unexpectedly due to various reasons: hardware failure, accidental deletion, or even cyber threats.

By regularly backing up your data, you create a safety net that allows you to recover important files and memories.

Access the ECNO cyber awareness tip sheet to stay informed about this month's topic and explore additional resources:

https://ecno.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/ECNO-CAM-Calendar-23-Aug3023_BackupData.pdf

Let's make March a month of digital preparedness!

New Grade 7/8 Mental Health Literacy Modules support student mental health and well-being

As of January 2024, the Ministry of Education introduced a series of three modules per grade to support the existing mental health literacy expectations within the grades 7 and 8 Health and Physical Education curriculum. This series of three, 40-minute modules per grade will be delivered by educators to support the existing mental health literacy expectations within the Health and Physical Education

curriculum. They're not new learning – they offer ways to enhance the delivery of the existing curriculum and focus on mental health literacy.

This learning will help equip students with inclusive, culturally responsive, evidence-informed knowledge, skills, and strategies to support their mental health and well-being. They align with and support the work we do in the Simcoe County District School Board to support student mental health.

The modules were informed by extensive consultation with parents/guardians, students, cultural, and community organizations.

There are important reasons to bring these modules into the classroom:

- Students want to learn more about mental health at school (<https://smho-smsso.ca/online-resources/hearnowon-2021-student-voices-on-mental-health-final-report/>).
- This learning helps students develop skills that support positive mental health.
- Mental health learning supports learning in all other areas.
- This learning can encourage conversations and help students in need reach support.
- As caring adults in the lives of young people, we want students to be well!

Feel free to watch the introductory video that provides more information: <https://vimeo.com/857720241/3877843c8c?share=copy>.

Mental health promotion strategy of the month - *Tense and Relax*

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*. This strategy helps children and youth develop the skills to notice how their body feels when they are tense and relaxed, and to learn how to relieve tensions and to self-regulate.

To practice *Tense and Relax* at home, together with your child, model this relaxation practice and work your way down your bodies, slowly tensing and relaxing each of your muscles. Discuss with them how each area of their body feels before the exercise, and then discuss how it feels afterwards. Have your child get comfortable; this exercise can be done when standing, sitting, or lying down. Children can be encouraged to: bring their shoulders up to their ears, hold for a count of 3, slowly relax for a count of 3, and repeat; push their arms down towards to floor, hold for a count of 3, slowly relax for a count of 3 and repeat, squeeze their hands into fists, hold for a count of 3, slowly relax for a count of 3 and repeat; squeeze their stomach in as if trying to fit between a fence, hold for a count of 3, slowly relax for a count of 3 and repeat; push their feet down to the floor, hold for a count of 3, slowly relax for a count of 3 and repeat.

Visit www.youtube.com/watch?v=J4mQm0hux1Q&t=1s to watch a video that guides you through a *Tense and Relax* muscle relaxation exercise.

See our elementary (<https://smho-smsso.ca/online-resources/sel-posters/>) and secondary (<https://smho-smsso.ca/online-resources/sel-posters-for-secondary/>) social-emotional learning poster series for a tense and relax classroom poster than can be used at home.

Follow along the Mental Health and Well-being social media accounts (@SCDSB_MHWP) to see how well-being is being supported in our schools.

Foster families needed in your community!

Children in our community need you! There is an urgent need for foster homes in Simcoe Muskoka. Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions is looking for diverse foster care providers who understand children's needs. The needs are diverse and range from babies to teens. Open your home to a child/youth and receive training, support, and between \$85 and \$155 per child and per day. Do you know anyone who may be interested? Visit <https://familyconnexions.ca/fosterconnexion/> to inquire, apply, and for more information. You may also call 705-726-6587 ext. 4.

Information provided by Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions

YouthReach

Every child should have the opportunity to participate in programs such as dance, music, and sports – but we know not all families can afford the registration fees. YouthReach is a Simcoe County based charity that helps provide kids with the opportunity to get involved in the programs they want to participate in. For more information and to apply visit: www.youthreach.ca.

Information provided by YouthReach

Sleep

Help your child get a good night's sleep by:

- Setting a consistent bedtime and wake-time for your child (even on weekends). Children aged 5 -13 need at least 9-11 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night.
- Encouraging your child to establish a relaxing bedtime routine that

includes reading, taking a bath, or listening to music.

- Setting up a sleeping space with your child that is cool, dark, and quiet.
- Keeping technology out of your child's bedroom – it interferes with natural sleep cycles.
- Discouraging caffeinated products, as they may interfere with your child's ability to fall asleep.
- Being a role model by making sleep a priority in your own life!

Looking for more information? Call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-5720 to speak with a public health nurse or visit www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

CATCHING UP WITH JANKOWSKI

