



ORCHARD PARK PUBLIC SCHOOL

January 2023

Principal: Chris Chater

Vice Principal: Jennifer Viherjoki

Safe Arrival Phone Number: 705-325-7772—Press “1”

Safe Arrival Email Address: orcattendance@scdsb.on.ca

Please call or e-mail when your student(s) will be absent. We thank you for your cooperation.

Hello Panther Families,

Well, according to the calendar, we are officially halfway through our school year. Hard to believe, isn't it!! January seemed to be the month where Mother Nature decided to play catch up for winter weather. But that hasn't slowed down anything in the building. Students have been working away on their literacy and numeracy activities, learning about technology and coding, as well as finishing up assessments and assignments prior to the end of Term 1. Staff members have been incredible at volunteering their time to support students with academic challenges, practicing with our Intermediate Girls Volleyball and Boys Basketball teams, beginning intramurals with our Junior division, creating puzzle clubs, Band, GSA, running OPHEA activities and continuing with ECO-School initiatives. We had an incredible Lunar New Year celebration where students learned a little bit more about this special time for many of our Panther families. I am sure that I have likely missed something on that list!!

Looking ahead, we will have our Kindergarten Concert this month. A milestone event for many of our youngest learners and their families. Information regarding the performances has been sent home from your child's respective teacher. We look forward to those special moments! Also, February is Black History month. We will be focusing on sharing stories of celebration and joy, highlighting some amazing Black Canadians and their contributions to the world we live in. Ms. Wallace has pulled some awesome library resources for teachers to use, and to allow students to borrow in order to support this learning.

We have started the Panther Den - a place where gently used clothing items can be selected and worn to help those students who might need a winter coat, hats, mitts, or perhaps have hit a growth spurt and need a few items to offset their closet. More information will come regarding this endeavor, and we will be eventually opening this up to our school community.

Orchard Park is a very busy place and our parking lot is no exception. A gentle reminder that with the hustle and bustle of several buses, many walking families, and our attached daycare parents, our parking lot is a one-way travel experience throughout the entire school day. Please enter via the West Street entrance, and exit via Calverley Street. This will help maintain the flow of traffic while keeping everyone safe. This applies on Inclement Weather days as well.

Thank you to all of our learners, educators, office and custodial staff for making Orchard Park the incredible place that it is - full of opportunities for learning, laughing, and celebrating!

All the best, Mrs. Viherjoki

Character attribute for the month of February

Inclusiveness: We include everyone in what we do and value their contributions. More information about character education can be found here: www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character_education.

Significant days, holy days, holidays and heritage recognition occurring in the month of February

You can now link directly to the SCDSB Days of Observance on the SCDSB website: <https://bit.ly/3Ln2Mfb>.

Important Dates:

- February: Black History Month
- February 2: National Sweater Day
- February 16: Kindergarten Performance
- February 17: Report Cards go home
- February 20: Family Day
- February 22: Indigenous Pink Shirt Day
- February 23: Chess Tournament @ Severn Shores
- March 2: Grad Photos

NEW Orchard Park Website

Please check out our newly updated Orchard Park website for school news as well as easy links for bus delays, student absence reporting, school calendar, newsletters and so much more!

<https://orc.scdsb.on.ca/>

IMPORTANT Inclement Weather Safe Arrival Procedure

On Inclement Weather days (when busses are cancelled) **ALL** absences will be assumed due to weather unless you notify the office otherwise. If your student(s) will be away due to weather, **you DO NOT need to call in or email**. A general Inclement Weather Safe Arrival call will be made to **ALL** families of absent students. This message is different than the regular Safe Arrival message (for non-inclement weather days) and can be disregarded **UNLESS** your child is supposed to be at school and is unaccounted for – in which case you should call us to confirm their attendance. Thank you.

End of Day Procedures

In order to minimize confusion and increase safety at the end of day, **including inclement weather days**, we are asking that you please pick up your children at regular dismissal time which is 3:30pm. You can pick them up at their regular dismissal doors. Your child's teacher should have sent communication home as to where their dismissal door is. If you are not sure where your child's door is, please contact the school. If you need to pick up your children early, please pick them up from the front door before 3:00pm. After 3:15pm, it is difficult to locate students as most of them are in the hallways getting ready for dismissal and going to their bus lines.

We appreciate your cooperation in keeping our end of day as calm and safe as possible.

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 **North 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 SCSTC 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 SCSTC 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>.



National Sweater Day

A message from Orchard Park's Eco Team:

Since 2010, more than a million Canadians have shown their support for limiting global temperature rise to 1.5 degrees Celsius by turning down their thermostats by the same amount (or more) and wearing their favourite sweaters to stay warm. WWF National Sweater Day is an opportunity to raise awareness about climate change and energy conservation, and show how together – classroom by classroom, school by school – we can be a part of the solution. Orchard Park will celebrate National Sweater Day on February 2nd. We encourage everyone to wear a sweater and turn down the heat! For more information, visit:

<https://schools.wwf.ca/events/primary-sweater-day/>



Popcorn Fundraiser

The Grade 8 students are selling popcorn to raise money for their Grade 8 Grad Trip. Popcorn will be sold at nutrition break **each Friday for \$2 a bag**. (Should there be a P.A day on Friday, popcorn will be sold on the Thursday instead.)

Flavours include: Sweet and Salty, Butter and Salt, White Cheddar and Dill Pickle

The Grade 8s thank you for your support!

We're Fundraising with Mabel's Labels! Personalized waterproof name labels for your kids' stuff!

1. Visit campaigns.mabelslabels.com and search **Orchard Park Public School**
2. Purchase your labels
3. Labels ship right to your door!

You get labels, we raise funds.



Keep connected with our school and with the SCDSB

It's important to get accurate information about what's going on at your school and at the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB). Here are some ways to do that:

- Subscribe to our school's website by visiting the 'What's New' section at <https://orc.scdsb.on.ca/>. You can sign up to receive emails about school news updates and information during emergency situations. It's easy to subscribe – visit our website and click the 'Subscribe' link at the very top of the page. Provide your email and click 'Subscribe'; a message will be sent to your inbox with a link to click to confirm that you want to subscribe. You can unsubscribe at any time using the link at the bottom of each email.
- Sign up to receive SCDSB media releases by clicking the 'Subscribe' button at www.scdsb.on.ca.
- Follow the SCDSB on Twitter (@SCDSB_Schools), Facebook (facebook.com/SCDSB) and Instagram (instagram.com/scdsb). **Also, don't forget to follow our twitter page: <https://twitter.com/OrchardParkPS>**

Notice to students and parents/guardians of students regarding out-of-area-requests

Under Simcoe County District School Board procedures (APM A7000 – School Attendance Areas), it is possible for students to apply for and receive permission to attend an out-of-attendance-area school. Students will be permitted to continue in attendance as long as there are pupil places available. They may be required to return to their home school or transfer to another school when the capacity of the school they are attending has been reached and space is required for students residing within the designated attendance areas. An approval may be revoked at any time by the superintendent of education, after consultation with the receiving school principal, for reasons related to the student's behaviour, attendance, actions or inactions. Transportation to and from school is the responsibility of the out-of-attendance-area student and/or parent/guardian.

Black History Month

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) recognizes and celebrates Black History Month every February. The SCDSB is committed to improving equity of access and opportunity for Black students, staff, and parents/guardians, and to creating a safe and caring learning environment that promotes the human rights of staff, students, and parent/guardians. The initiatives undertaken by the SCDSB have been embedded in teaching and learning at all school levels, and centrally, for Black History Month and throughout the year. Follow the SCDSB on social media to see how schools are recognizing Black History Month.

Let's Talk Kindergarten:

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: https://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/kindergarten.

Early learning and child care

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

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 (Mar. 13 to 17). 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: https://scdsb.on.ca/elementary/planning_for_school/childcare_before_after.

SCDSB Character Education program

Our SCDSB Character Education program was developed over 20 years ago. As a school board, we are moving forward to update the SCDSB Character Education program, along with the attributes. The intended implementation date for our new Character Education program will be September 2023. To make this successful, it is imperative that everyone has an opportunity to have a voice. Currently, we are eliciting student voice from our elementary and secondary students and understanding the important partnership with parents/guardians; we are asking if you could take a moment to fill out the below survey. The survey opens on Feb. 6 and will remain open until Feb. 10:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/M2BF38X>.

**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. The remaining sessions include:

IEPs and school-based assessments – information for parents/caregivers

Jan. 12 — 6:30 to 7:30p.m.

Supporting students with autism spectrum disorder

Feb. 14 — 6:30 to 7:30p.m.

Supporting students as they transition into school, from one school to another, and from school upon graduation

April 20 — 6:30 to 7:30p.m.

Working with families to create safe and supportive environments for children who have experienced trauma

May 9 — 6:30 to 7:30p.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.

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. The remaining sessions include:

Feb. 9, 2023

March 2, 2023

April 27, 2023

Guide to Attuned Limit Setting

Emotional Regulation for Kids and Adults

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>.

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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.

Registration now open for summer eLearning!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school courses in July 2023 for current high school students or adult learners who are interested in 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. 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 <http://thelearningcentres.com/high-school-student/summer-school>.

SCDSB Anti-sex Trafficking Protocol and resources for parents/guardians

In 2021-22, the Ministry of Education directed Ontario school boards to develop an anti-sex trafficking protocol that was tailored to the needs of their community. The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) has developed a protocol and relevant training and resources for staff, students and parents/guardians. The focus of the SCDSB's protocol and resources is to protect students and empower school communities to play a key role in fighting sex trafficking and keeping children and youth safe from sexual exploitation.

More information, including a link to the SCDSB Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocol and associated resources, is available on the SCDSB website:

www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/safe_schools/anti-sex_trafficking_protocol.

Math games at home

Playing math games at home is a great way to reinforce math concepts that students learn at school. The YouTube channel MMMathMania has a large number of videos of math games that can be played using paper, dice, and/or playing cards.

Check out the channel at: www.youtube.com/@mmathmaniamathgamesmore3985 or search MMMathMania on YouTube.

Evaluating early literacy

The Ministry of Education has directed all Ontario school boards to begin implementing the recommendations outlined in the Right to Read Inquiry. As a result, primary educators are shifting from using leveled texts for reading instruction as they encourage reliance on guessing strategies to solve unknown words. Instead, educators are beginning to use a scope and sequence to systematically teach phonemic awareness (awareness of the sounds in words) and phonics (understanding of the letters that represent sounds). Students may apply the phonics skills they have learned by reading 'decodable' or 'phonetically controlled' texts.

As a result, educators are moving away from using PM Benchmarks and moving towards assessments that measure foundational reading skills. For example, in Grade 1, educators will be observing a child's ability to identify the sounds they hear in a word, identify the letter(s) that represent the sound, and their ability to blend the sounds together to decode (read) the word and encode (write) the word. In later primary, educators will be observing a child's understanding of more complex letter/sound relationships such as prefixes and suffixes.

Educators will also consider a child's achievement in reading fluency, vocabulary development, and reading comprehension when assigning a report card grade for reading.

To support your child at home, the following documents provide activities that may help foster these foundational skills:

Phonological Awareness Activities for Families: <https://bit.ly/3WVsexb>

Supporting Reading Development at Home: <https://bit.ly/3X3wB9w>

Exercising together can make your family stronger and healthier

Families that exercise together get stronger in more ways than one. Getting your daily dose of exercise not only helps to prevent health risks, it builds strong muscles and bones, develops positive body image, supports mental health, and strengthens the family bond. With so many great reasons to get moving, why aren't Canadians doing it more often? One of the most common barriers reported is time. This is also one of the biggest roadblocks to spending quality time together as a family. With Family Day just around the corner, why not plan a weekend of activities that gets the whole family out and moving! Here are some tips to help make family fitness fun for everyone.

Put family first

Make the focus of family fitness about family time. Use this time to connect with one another, share stories, discuss interests, check in on the day, or just make each other laugh. Quality family time is important, no matter your age!

Continued ...

Take classes together

Ask your local health and fitness centre about classes offered to parents and kids, or family-oriented drop in programs. Centres like the YMCA often have open family swim times for family members of all ages to enjoy. If your little one is too young to swim in the pool, look for child-minding or parent and tot programs.

Plan outdoor activities

Set aside one day every weekend to do something active as a family such as sledging, skating, or hiking. Making physical activity part of your routine will set your family up for healthy habits now and in the future. Don't forget to splurge on some healthy snacks after a good workout!

Surround your family with active people

Healthy habits can be contagious! Surround your family with active people who enjoy healthy lifestyles and you'll be more likely to make those same choices. Group classes or drop-in programs are a great way to meet new people that share your passion for fitness.

Spend quality time together this Family Day weekend

The YMCA is a great place to have fun with the whole family while building healthy habits of physical fitness and well-being. With activities like open family gym and open family swim, family members of all ages can be healthy and active together. To find your local YMCA and view Family Day weekend activities, visit www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/schedules.

Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka