



Grizzly News

December 2020

DID YOU KNOW?

Use the Google Translate App to read the newsletter in your preferred language!



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Hello Grizzlies:

It goes without saying as we head into December, that this has been the most unpredictable year in memory for most of the staff, students, and community members of Maple Grove. Many amongst us in the Grizzly community will not be sad to see the end of the year 2020, and many more look forward to a fresh start in 2021.

My perspective however, is a little different. I have the opportunity to spend the day with children, and children have a way of putting things into perspective. I am grateful for the opportunity that we were able to get the school up and running this year. Many of our families are facing a very difficult time as we navigate the reality of Covid-19. I believe that this building, in addition to the amazing online opportunities our staff are providing, has provided our students (and staff) with some stability in these uncertain times. Within our walls are the sounds of laughter, the smiles of children, and the reminder that what is important is how we treat one another. While I too am looking forward to a fresh start in 2021, I will forever be grateful to the students within our walls for showing me the importance of education. Their relentless optimism, their smiles, and their willingness to see the bright side of every situation reminds me that the future is looking as bright and happy as ever.

With three weeks to go until the Winter Break, take some time to remember what it is like to be a kid. Get outside; enjoy the simple things in life this holiday season - a cold winter walk, a good toboggan hill, building in the snow, and a warm cup of hot chocolate. Take some time to play games with your kids. Stop for a moment to look at their smiles, and to remember that the most important thing you can do for your family this Christmas break is to spend some quality time together.

Happy December Grizzlies.



Character attribute for the month of December

Empathy - we strive to understand and appreciate the feelings and actions of others.

More information about character education can be found here:

www.scdsb.on.ca/about/character_education.

High school information events for Grade 8 students

Is your child starting Grade 9 next year? High school information events will happen virtually this winter. Student leaders and staff at the school will give an overview of what's new and what to expect. Different pathways and courses offered will be explained. Visit your school's website for more information.

COVID-19 self-assessment

All students and staff will be expected to self-screen prior to attending school each day, using a self-assessment tool provided by the SMDHU. Students or staff with symptoms must stay home from school. To access the COVID-19 self-assessment tool, please visit the [SMDHU website](#).

★ Elementary (Grade JK-8) Learn@Home and in-person learning

Families will be receiving a survey regarding learning modes (in person and Learn@Home) during the week of Dec. 7-11. If you do not receive your survey by Tuesday, Dec. 8, please contact research@scdsb.on.ca.

Days of awareness and recognition taking place in December

Throughout the year, there are many awareness days that focus on different causes and recognition. The Simcoe County District School Board has developed a list of these days as a guide for schools. Schools may participate in recognizing some or all of these days in various ways. This list is not exhaustive. Following are the days of awareness and recognition that the SCDSB will recognize during the month of December:

Dec. 6	National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women
Dec 11-18	Chanukah
Dec. 21	Winter Solstice
Dec 25	Christmas
Dec 26-Jan 1	Kwanzaa
Jan 1, 2021	Happy New Year

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 **Central** zone.

When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, as in previous years. It is always a family decision whether or not it is safe for your child(ren) to leave for school under severe weather conditions.

This year, please note that students who are unable to attend school due to bus cancellations will be able to access learning materials on Google Classroom.

Students in the Learn@Home program will continue with regular programming as scheduled.



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 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>

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.

Historically, in-person Grade 1 FI Family Information Nights are held annually in advance of the application process for the following school year. This year, due to restrictions to large-group public gatherings, in-person Family Information Nights will not be held. In lieu of this, an [information page on the board's public website](#) has been created to allow families the ability to access and learn about the program and the application process.

The online Grade 1 FI application form will be available from 9 a.m. on Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2020 until 4 p.m. on Friday, Dec. 18, 2020. In Grade 1, enrollment in the FI program is limited to a maximum of two classes of 20 students per class at each host site for the FI program. The electronic applications will be processed in the order determined by a digitally randomized lottery system.

Please note that the host sites for FI may change during your child's time in the program, and your child may need to move schools. This may also include splitting the program between two different sites.

Are you looking for extra mathematics support for your Grade 6 to 10 student?

[TVO Mathify](#) offers FREE one-on-one online Grade 6-10 math tutoring to students enrolled in Ontario's publicly-funded English-language schools. Features include an interactive whiteboard as well as voice and text chat to make it easy to upload a math question and figure it out with the support of a math tutor, at a time that works for you.

TVO Mathify is like a personalized math coach to support students' learning at home. Sign-up, login and connect with an Ontario certified teacher of your choice. It is anonymous and secure, and can be used from a phone, tablet or computer. Math tutors are available from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. ET Monday to Friday and 3:30 to 9 p.m. ET Sunday.

What students are saying about TVO Mathify:

"I really liked my tutor. She helped a lot. Also I love the whiteboard, and all the tools you can use to solve your problems." – Grade 7 student, Halton District School Board

"The tutor was very calm even though I initially had no clue what I was doing. I would absolutely recommend this site to anyone that needs help with their math." – Grade 10 student, Peel District School Board



Do you know a student from 15 to 18 years of age who wants to develop skills and explore career opportunities? Youth Job Connection Summer (YJCS) can help!

YJCS includes 20-30 hours of paid (\$13.40 per hour) workshops to help them:

- Identify career options that could 'fit' based on their interests, strengths and abilities
- Understand the pathway that is best for them – education, apprenticeship or work
- Develop their soft skills, such as customer service, leadership and communication
- Manage workplace and employer expectations like a pro

YJCS includes hands-on job experience and exposure to careers and workplaces so that they can:

- Explore career options and gain work experience
- Participate in a paid job placement matching the individual's interests and abilities
- Access financial support for transportation, work clothing and equipment costs, if needed
- Get job-related certification or training

Know someone who might be interested?

Call the Career Centre at 705-725-8990 or email info@barriecareercentre.com.

Eligible participants must be 15-18, unemployed, full time student, resident of Ontario and eligible to work in Canada.

Youth Job Connection Summer is an Employment Ontario program.

Reminder about sledding safety at school

Student safety is our first priority, and although we do allow 'crazy carpets' and soft sleds at our school, we do not allow hard sleds, two-person sleds or snow racers. We do supervise sledding and we remind students of safety rules on a regular basis.

We want to inform parents that if students are sledding at school, Ophea recommends that they should wear a properly fitted (as per manufacturer's guidelines) and properly worn CSA-approved hockey helmet or snow sport helmet certified by a recognized safety standards association. If you send a sled and helmet (optional) for use during nutrition break/recess, you are giving permission for your child to take part in this activity.



School playground structures are closed for the winter

Every winter, school playground structures are closed. Students are made aware of this during school hours through announcements and staff reminders during breaks. This may not be well known throughout the community, despite signs indicating that playground structures are a winter hazard and are closed. The Canadian Standards Association regulations make recommendations for the depth of ground cover required to minimize injuries (e.g. sand, pea gravel or wood chips). These surfaces cannot be maintained when the ground freezes. Injuries from falling would be more significant on frozen ground. We strongly recommend that you do not allow your children to play on any structures while the ground is frozen.



Physical activity can make the holidays less stressful

For many, the holiday season can be a source of great physical and mental stress, and this year is no exception with the added pressures of the pandemic. Balancing finances, purchasing gifts, finding new ways to celebrate and connect while staying safe, eating unhealthy foods and staying up late can all contribute to increased anxiety, stress and fatigue. Did you know that being physically active is one of the single best ways we can naturally reduce stress? Here are three reasons why you should consider staying active this holiday season:

Physical activity boosts your mood – The relationship between the mind and the body is very strong. Physical activity releases endorphins in your body – making you feel calm, less anxious and happier. Providing yourself and your kids with a small amount of relaxation or ‘time-out’ every day – even just 15 minutes – can also improve your health dramatically. Try taking a [virtual yoga class](#); even a 10-minute walk can do the trick!

Physical activity helps you sleep – Physical activity leads to better sleep and better sleep leads to less stress. Research shows that people who get regular physical activity fall asleep faster, sleep longer and get higher quality sleep. Being well-rested helps us cope with stress and gives us more energy to tackle whatever life throws our way!

Physical activity reduces your stress hormone – Physical activity decreases the amount of cortisol – the body’s stress hormone – circulating in our bloodstream. When we get stressed out, our cortisol levels spike. Exercise is a great way to help lower them.

The YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka offers many opportunities to stay active this holiday season, both in-person and virtually. Our health and fitness centres in Innisfil and Collingwood are open and ready to safely welcome you and your family. With registered activities like open gym, family swim and our popular Y Kids program, the Y offers plenty of great opportunities to be active with your family in a safe environment. For more information on booking a visit to your YMCA, visit ymcasm.ca/FAQ. If you are looking for activities to do in the comfort of your home, YMCAHome.ca has a variety of free, virtual fitness classes and family-friendly workouts. Be well and stay safe this holiday season!

Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka

COVID-19 holiday travel

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit recommends that you only travel outside of your home for essential reasons such as work, school and purchasing necessities. Avoid travelling outside of your community as much as possible, including to attend family gatherings, religious services or events at municipal venues, in order to reduce transmission between geographic areas.

Recommendations for travel may change. Check for updates regularly at <https://travel.gc.ca/covid-19-travel>.

For more tips to keep you and your family healthy this holiday season, contact *Health Connection* at 1-877-721-7520 or visit the health unit’s website at www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/Topics/COVID-19.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Stress: Kids get it too!

Kids have stress, just like us. Stress is a normal part of life, but our bodies are only made to handle it for short amounts of time. Continued stress can cause feelings of pressure, anxiety, and tiredness. It can make it hard for kids to focus in school and can cause them to become sick, get lower grades or make unhealthy choices.

It's easy to mistake signs of stress for bad behaviour in your child. You can help them learn to manage stress by staying calm, showing love and talking openly about their feelings. Encourage them to try calming activities like deep breathing or doing something active. If the stress continues, be sure talk to your child's family doctor or health care provider.

For more tips to keep you and your family healthy this school year, contact *Health Connection* at 1-877-721-7520 or visit the health unit's website at www.simcoemuskokahealth.org.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

Coping with anxiety

Feelings of anxiety can be common among teens, especially right now. Sometimes normally happy teens will become anxious or fearful about something for a day or two but will return to normal without any need for help from their parents. However, some teens experience more intense and frequent feelings of anxiety that prevent them from participating in normal everyday life.

Creating a positive family environment, encouraging regular school attendance and helping your teen understand and discover ways to cope with their anxiety can help. Encourage your teen to explore available online and local services.

[Big White Wall](#) : 24/7 online mental health support network for individuals 16 years and older.

[Kids Help Phone](#): Children and youth 18 and under who need to talk to someone about their mental health can call Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868, for 24/7 virtual, or text 686868.

[COVID-19 Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#)

If you would like to learn more about monitoring and understanding your teenager's emotions and behaviours, ways to talk openly with your teenager and encouraging your teenager to practice their coping skills, call *Health Connection* at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit

