

# Couchiching Heights

455 Laclie St N, Orillia

T: 705-325-9311 / F: 705-325-8099

Principal: Lindsey Cook      Vice-Principal: Megan Francis

Website: [cou.scdsb.on.ca](http://cou.scdsb.on.ca) | Twitter: @coustaff



## Principal's Message:

Dear CHPS Families,

Can you believe we are weeks away from the official winter solstice? I must say we have accomplished a lot over the last month. Families came in for Student-Led Conferences and progress reports went home. We had our first snowfall of the season and the children got to sled and make snow creations.

We have so much to be thankful for, to look forward to, and to celebrate here at Couchiching Heights Public School! We look forward to a wonderful month of December as our grade one students visit Trillium Manor to sing for the seniors, the band at Orillia Secondary School (OSS) comes to perform for us, and our student leaders prepare a play-day for our students before the holidays.

Math is a continued focus within the SCDSB and at CHPS. We continue to support students with their problem-solving strategies using proportional reasoning from Kindergarten through to grade 8. Students use proportional reasoning in early math learning, for example, when they think of 8 as two fours or four twos rather than thinking of it as one more than seven. They use proportional reasoning later in learning when they think of how a speed of 50 km/h is the same as a speed of 25 km/30 min. You can support us at home by continuing to talk about math. Model math talk for your child and remember to keep a positive attitude - let's continue to build on and model a growth mindset!

Best wishes for the month of December and the New Year to come,

Your Partner in Education,  
Mrs. Cook

## Upcoming Events

### Dec. 5

Author Visit- Gwen Petreman (K-3)

### Dec. 11

Vision Screening for SK students

### Dec. 12

Gr. 5 Outdoor Education trip to Springwater Park

### Dec. 12

Holiday Movie Night at CHPS

### Dec.15

High School Information Night @ OSS 6-7:30 pm

### Dec. 16

OSS Music Concert

### Dec. 20

Last day of school for 2019!  
Classes resume on Jan. 6<sup>th</sup>, 2020!!

## School Website

Please visit our school website at <http://cou.scdsb.on.ca/>. Here you will find helpful resources, important dates on our school calendar, and can learn more about the events and activities happening throughout the school year. We also encourage all families to **subscribe** to the school website by clicking on the "subscribe" link at the top of the homepage of the website. When you subscribe you will be emailed our school newsletters, Week at a Glance (an overview of activities occurring at the school each week), and other important updates and messages pertaining to school wide activities and events. Also included on the homepage of the website is our school Twitter feed @coustaff. Check out up-to-date activities happening daily at the school!



## New On-Line Volunteer Portal – Upcoming Deadline

Volunteers who received a letter indicating they were required to submit an updated CBC/VSS for review **must complete their registration on the portal by December 31, 2019.** Volunteering at the school will not be permitted after this date until all steps in the approval process have been completed.

Volunteers who received a letter with a unique I.D. code for registration on the portal, must complete their registration on the on-line portal using the code by December 31, 2019 at the very latest. The unique I.D. code will expire after this date. Current approved volunteers who did not register on the portal using the unique I.D. code by December 31, 2019 will be required to submit a new CBC/VSS for review and register as a new volunteer. Volunteering at the school will not be permitted until all steps in the approval process have been completed.



Please contact the school if you have questions.

## News from School Council

Please visit our school website at <http://cou.scdsb.on.ca/> if you would like to view school council agenda's and minutes from our monthly meetings. Our next School Council meeting will take place on January 7th from 6:30-8:00pm in the school library. School Council is always looking for new members and we would love for you to join us to learn more about council and volunteer opportunities. Please know that you do not have to be a voting member to attend council meetings and/or sit on sub-committees.



## Pay for field trips, lunch days, etc. with School Cash Online

If you have not already done so, be sure to sign up for School Cash Online. This is our preferred method of payment for all school fundraising including lunch days and field trips. School Cash Online allows you to pay with your debit or credit card. Follow these steps to get started:

1. Go to [simcoecounty.schoolcashionline.com](http://simcoecounty.schoolcashionline.com) or from our school website click on "Pay Fees"
2. Register and add your child to the newly created account
3. View and purchase items through echeck or credit card

The School Cash Parent Helpdesk is available 24/7 at 1-866-961-1803 or email [parenthelp@schoolcashionline.com](mailto:parenthelp@schoolcashionline.com).



## Safe Schools Reporting Tool

The SCDSB has developed a Safe Schools Reporting Tool, which is available on our school website home page, <http://cou.scdsb.on.ca>, as a Quick Access button.

The Safe Schools Reporting Tool gives students, parents and community members a way to report an incident online – whether it be bullying, drug use, vandalism or otherwise. Students are still encouraged to speak with a trusted, caring adult at school or home about their concerns, but the online form provides another option to those individuals who may not feel comfortable speaking in person.

When an incident is reported, an email will automatically be generated and sent to the principal and vice-principal(s) of that school, and school staff will follow-up.

Student safety and well-being is always our top priority. All members of our school community have the right to be safe and feel safe in our school community. This is one more tool at our disposal to achieve and maintain a positive school climate.



## 12 Days of Giving

Couchiching Heights is collecting for The Sharing Place Food Centre this Holiday Season. The Sharing Place Food Centre relies on food donations to keep their shelves stocked. They play a vital role in helping the most vulnerable people in our community have access to nutritious food.

		<u>Dec 4</u> <b>WHOLE-GRAIN CEREAL</b>	<u>Dec 5</u> <b>KRAFT DINNER</b>	<u>Dec 6</u> <b>LUNCH SNACKS</b>
<u>Dec 9</u> <b>OATMEAL</b>	<u>Dec 10</u> <b>PASTA/PASTA SAUCE</b>	<u>Dec 11</u> <b>CANNED MEAT</b>	<u>Dec 12</u> <b>DIAPERS/FORMULA</b>	<u>Dec 13</u> <b>CANNED VEG</b>
<u>Dec 16</u> <b>FRUIT/VEG POUCHES</b>	<u>Dec 17</u> <b>SOUP/COFFEE</b>	<u>Dec 18</u> <b>HATS/ MITTS</b>	<u>Dec 19</u> <b>PRODUCT OF YOUR CHOICE</b>	

**THE SHARING PLACE**  
FOOD CENTRE

## Healthy Holiday Food Drive

The Sharing Place needs your support this holiday season to provide access to healthy food to over 12% of our community who are food insecure

**Top Needed Items**

- Peanut Butter
- Pasta Sauce
- Whole Grain Cereal (Cheerios, Corn Flakes)
- Canned Tomatoes
- Canned Vegetables
- Canned Mixed Beans
- Canned Meat (ham, chicken) Fish (salmon, tuna)
- Toilet Paper
- Coffee: Instant & Ground
- Diapers: size 4, 5 & 6
- Financial Donations (we purchase fresh food)

Financial Donations can be made to help us purchase fresh food.  
Donate online at [SharingPlaceOrillia.org](http://SharingPlaceOrillia.org)

**THE SHARING PLACE**  
FOOD CENTRE

Donation Drop off @  
95 Dufferin, St. Orillia  
705.327.4273

## Reminder about sledding safety at school and Outside Play

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 (the Ontario Physical and Health Education Association) 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 crazy carpet and helmet (optional) to school with your child, you are giving permission for your child to take part in this activity. Please note that students who wish to use the snow hills at recess must be properly dressed (i.e., snow pants, hat, mitts, boots, etc.). Students should not need to call home because their clothing has gotten wet during outside play. It is always a good idea to pack extra clothing (i.e., socks, mitts, hat, etc.) in case this happens.

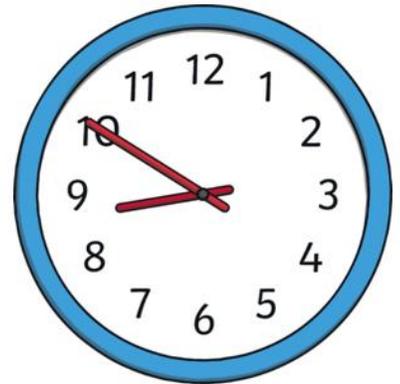
Outside play is an important part of our day and all children are encouraged to play outside during the morning and afternoon recesses unless the temperature is too cold (falls below -25°C, or if the wind chill is -28°C or greater) or the weather is rainy.



Please ensure that your child is dressed appropriately for the weather and temperatures. Please consider sending a change of clothing so that your child is comfortable in class. If possible, please place your child's name on any extra clothing brought to school so that if it is lost or misplaced we can return it to its owner.

### Attendance & Late Arrivals

Couchiching Heights has been identified as one to the top schools with persistent absenteeism. We are working toward improving this situation and are asking the school community to support us by coming to school regularly and arriving prior to the 8:50 a.m. start bell.



#### One or two days a week doesn't seem like much but...

If your child misses...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling, that's...
1 day every 2 weeks	20 days per year	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 day per week	40 days per year	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years
2 days per week	80 days per year	16 weeks per year	Over 5 years
3 days per week	120 days per year	24 weeks per year	Nearly 8 years

#### How about 10 minutes late a day? Surely that won't affect my child?

He/she is only missing...	That equals...	Which is...	And over 13 years of schooling, that's...
10 mins per day	50 minutes per week	Nearly 1 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
20 mins per day	1 hr. 40 mins per week	Over 2 ½ weeks per year	Nearly 1 year
30 mins per day	Half a day per week	4 weeks per year	Nearly 1 ½ years
1 hour per day	1 day per week	8 weeks per year	Over 2 ½ years

## Restorative Think-Sheets

As part of school-wide progressive discipline plan, we are continuing to implement restorative think sheets as a way to restore peer conflict, rebuild relationships with staff and solve problems collaboratively. If your child is sent home with a think sheet, please sign it and return it to your child's teacher the following day. If your child has received more than one think sheet, there may be in-school consequences.



## S.C.D.S.B. NEWS! -----

### High school information nights coming to a school near you!

Is your child starting Grade 9 next year? High school information nights happen this fall and winter. This event gives an overview of what's new, what to expect, as well as a chance to check out the school and ask questions. Attend our local high school information night to find out what's offered at Orillia Secondary School info night on January 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30pm at 250 Collegiate Drive, Orillia. Check out the full schedule of info nights and more information at [www.scdsb.on.ca/secondary/planning\\_for\\_high\\_school](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/secondary/planning_for_high_school).



### 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
-----------	--

### School playgrounds 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.

### **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](http://www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). Our school is in the **North Zone**. When buses are cancelled, schools remain open for student learning, unless otherwise noted.

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>

For school event cancellations in case of inclement weather, follow our school's Twitter account @coustaff or listen to your local radio station for event cancellation information.

### **Physical activity can make the holidays less stressful**

For many, the holiday season can be a source of great physical and mental stress. Planning family gatherings, attending work parties, buying gifts, staying up late and eating unhealthy foods 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:

1. 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 yoga class, or even a 10-minute walk can do the trick!
2. 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!

3. 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. Open gym, family swim, yoga, and our popular Y kids drop-in program provide great opportunities to be active with your family. For more information about programs offered at your local YMCA, please visit [www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca](http://www.ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca).

*Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka*

### **How to stop the spread of germs to help us all stay healthy this school year**

Colds and influenza spread easily from person to person. These germs can spread directly from person to person when someone coughs or sneezes, or indirectly when germs land on hard surfaces like door knobs, desks, keyboards and then are touched by someone else. These germs can then enter the body through the eyes, nose or mouth.

The most important thing you can do to keep from getting sick and stop the spread of germs to others is wash your hands! Wash with soap and warm running water for at least 15 seconds (or try singing "row row row your boat"). If your hands are not visibly dirty you can use alcohol-based hand rub (hand sanitizer) for 15 seconds. You can also get your flu shot, cover your mouth when you cough and sneeze and stay home if you are sick. Teach your kids to do the same!

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](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org).

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.*



## Ditch Digital Devices and Plug into Play

This winter, swap screen time for play time together. Children need play to learn, grow and be healthy. Unstructured child-led activities, or “free play”, make a world of difference. There are many ways to play together as a family:

- Get outdoors by taking a winter hike, making a snowman, or building a snow fort
- Make your own musical instruments and move to the music
- Play hopscotch, tag, or hide and seek
- Play dress up together
- Set up an obstacle course using couch cushions for your child to navigate



Encourage your children to lead the way and experience fun from their perspective!

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](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org).

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.*

## Coping with anxiety

Feelings of anxiety can be common among teens. 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.



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 and talk to a public health nurse about Triple P Positive Parenting Program or visit [www.tripleontario.ca/en/home.aspx](http://www.tripleontario.ca/en/home.aspx).

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.*