

# Couchiching Heights

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Principal: Lindsey Cook    Vice-Principal: Megan Francis

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



## Principal's Message:

Happy Autumn!

Our school year is well under way and we are thrilled that all of our students have settled into their learning spaces and are well on their way to mastering a variety of curriculum expectations. Additionally, we are very pleased with our CHPS Families who have been wonderful partners in many ways: arriving to school on time, keeping non-medical pets off the school yard, returning our start up paperwork (student verification sheets, medical plans, etc.) and being extremely respectful of our request to ensure that you sign-in at the office if visiting the school and allowing us to call your child down if picking them up early. Your assistance in running our school is much appreciated and truly helps us keep all of our students safe.

Students and staff alike are working hard and many good things are happening at our school. Many school sports, clubs and activities have begun. Student Leadership Teams, Eco-club, Flag Football, Cross-Country, Lunchroom Helpers and Recycling Teams are only some of the opportunities that students have to get involved in Couchiching Heights' school life right now. Many of our parents are also volunteering their time to enrich our school, either as a classroom or breakfast club helper, with pizza or milk, or in a more formal capacity on our School Council.

I would like to thank the dedicated group of parents who came out to our first School Council meeting last month to discuss school life, fundraising and this year's priorities. They also worked very hard to help plan our Open House Night. I would like to extend a special thank you to Leslie McLeod, who worked very hard transforming our courtyard over the past month, with the help of some other parents, and CHPS and OSS students. The transformation is spectacular and we are very excited for the next phases of our courtyard plan to

## Upcoming Events

### Oct. 1

Open House 5-7pm

School Council Meeting 7-8pm

### Oct 2

International Walk to School Day

### Oct. 4

PA Day – No school for students

### Oct 11

Grade 7 Immunizations

### Oct. 14

Thanksgiving Monday

### Oct. 16

IEP's go home

### Oct. 17

School Picture Day

### Oct 21

Elections (gym closed for polling station)

### Oct 31

Orange and Black Day

### Nov. 5

School Council Meeting – 6:30-8:00pm

transpire. Outdoor learning has been a priority over the past year for our School Council, and it is so great seeing this learning space in our school come to life again! Council meetings are open to all parents and are a great way to learn more about our school, to get involved and to work with a team to improve school life for your children.

Many families have asked how they can support their child's learning at home. The big 4 to helping your child are: getting some fresh air (walk to school or go for an evening stroll), eating a family dinner nightly where possible, reading with your child (reading to them or next to them as they read), and getting your child to bed early (sleep helps to recharge the brain). We will do our best at school to ensure we are responsive to your child's needs too by completing our big 4: getting them outside daily, helping them learn social norms during nutrition break times, reading to them daily, and allowing time for mindful minutes.

**Sincerely,  
Mrs. Cook**

#### **Keep connected with our school and 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 <http://cou.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 Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) media releases by clicking the 'Subscribe' button at [www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca). The SCDSB Education Centre can be reached at 705-734-6363.
- Follow the SCDSB on Twitter (@SCDSB\_Schools), Facebook (facebook.com/SCDSB) and Instagram (instagram.com/scdsb). **You can follow just our school on Twitter @coustaff.**

When you subscribe to our school website 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!

**Please note that our school Week-at-a-Glance will only be available via email to website subscribers this year, so don't forget to subscribe ASAP! We have attached this weeks' to the monthly school newsletter as an example.**

### 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.

School Council would like to welcome families back and extend an invitation to attend our next School Council Meeting on October 1st, after the Open House, from 7:00-8:00pm 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. School Council meetings take place on the first Tuesday of every month (with the exception of a few dates) from 6:00-7:30pm.

### School Council members are invited to *Connections* event on Oct. 22

School council members are invited to join us at *Connections*, the Simcoe County District School Board's (SCDSB) school council development and networking event.

**When:** Tues. Oct. 22, 4 to 8 p.m.

**Where:** SCDSB Education Centre, 1170 Hwy. 26, Midhurst

Participants can gather tips, resources and important information to help you be more effective in your role on school council. You will also be able to contribute to group discussions, browse booths and enjoy snacks from our approved vendors, and network with fellow school council members and the Parent Involvement Committee. Register to attend at [www.scdsb.on.ca/connections](http://www.scdsb.on.ca/connections).



## Zinc Saves Lives Battery Recycling Campaign

Our "Me to We" leadership team will be collecting used batteries for the month of October.

Each year, hundreds of thousands of children die due to complications associated with zinc deficiency. One AA battery contains the same amount of zinc that can save the lives of six children.

During the Zinc Saves Lives Battery Recycling Campaign, Teck partners with Call2Recycle to help keep batteries out of landfills and help get zinc to those who need it most. For every battery recycled, Teck will donate the equivalent value of the zinc recycled to WE in support of their zinc and health program in WE villages in Kenya.

*Information provided by Tech.com*



## Want to volunteer at our school?

### Updated criminal background checks required for volunteers

We appreciate the commitment of all who volunteer at our school. In an effort to ensure the safety and well-being of our students, and in accordance with the Education Act, the SCDSB requires a complete and up-to-date Criminal Background Check Vulnerable Sector Screening (CBC-VSS) for all volunteers across the system. If you are a current, approved volunteer and your CBC-VSS is more than five years old, you will be receiving a notification this month indicating that you are required to submit a new CBC-VSS. If you wish to continue as a SCDSB volunteer, please complete the following steps:

1. Contact the school principal to obtain a CBC-VSS request letter.
2. Bring your CBC-VSS request letter to your local police detachment.
3. Submit your original and complete CBC-VSS to the school office for review by Oct. 31, 2019.

If you are a current SCDSB employee volunteering in the system, you are required to submit an updated CBC-VSS to the school where you will be volunteering. If you have completed a CBC-VSS within the past six months of the start of the school year for another organization, you may submit that original CBC-VSS for review. If you have questions, please contact the school.

### SCDSB Community Apps Portal makes volunteering easy

We appreciate the commitment of all who volunteer at our school. SCDSB Community Apps is an online portal that allows you to begin the process for volunteering at a SC DSB school. The portal eliminates much of the paperwork currently associated with volunteers. Volunteer applications and approvals will occur



online. The new mandate for Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA) training, for volunteers, is also part of the portal. The Volunteer Portal is available for all new people requesting to volunteer at a school location: <http://communityapps.scdsb.on.ca>.

### **Breakfast Club is Back!**

The Breakfast Club will be starting up again through the Eat Well to Excel/Breakfast for Learning program, but we are in need of volunteers. This year the program will be open to students from 8:30-8:50 in room 112. We will also be offering snack bowls in classrooms. Our muffin bakers were a big favourite with our kids last year—if you would be willing to sign up to bake 4 dozen muffins 1 week of the year, please contact the office for us to add you to this list. We look forward to getting the breakfast Club up & running again with your help!

### **CHPS is a NUT FREE and LATEX FREE school!**

We have a number of students in our community with nut allergies and would remind all parents and caregivers to check all labels prior to putting items in lunches. We strive to ensure that this a nut free environment to ensure that all of our students are safe. We also have members of our school community with a latex allergy. Please do not send in any items (e.g., balloons) that contain latex. Thank you for you in advance for your co-operation.

### **Procedures help keep our school safe**

The safety and well-being of students is our top priority. We have a number of procedures in place to keep our school safe. You can help your child understand and feel safe by:

- talking to them about the situations below
- reminding them that emergencies are rare
- telling them it's important to follow staff instructions in these situations

Parents should talk about the following emergency drills with their children:

- **Shelter in place** is used when there is an environmental or weather-related situation, like a chemical spill outside the building, or a major storm. Activities continue inside the school. Students and staff are not allowed to leave the building. The ventilation system may be shut off.
- A **hold and secure** is used when there is a situation in the community, not related to the school, like a bank robbery



nearby. Activities continue, but all exterior doors are locked. No one is allowed to enter or exit the school.

- A **lockdown** is used when there is a major incident or a threat of violence related to the school. Students and staff move to secure areas, away from doors and windows. Interior doors are locked, lights are shut off and blinds are drawn. Students and staff remain quiet. We practice lockdown drills at least two times per year. In the unlikely event of an actual lockdown situation, police ask that parents do not go to the school. Information will be communicated through the school board social media sites ([www.facebook.com/SCDSB](http://www.facebook.com/SCDSB) and [www.twitter.com/SCDSB\\_Schools](http://www.twitter.com/SCDSB_Schools)) and website ([www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca)), through local police and local media.
- All schools have **evacuation plans** in case of gas leaks, bomb threats or fire incidents that would require everyone to leave the school. We hold drills to practice our evacuation plan. In a real evacuation, students and staff may go to the evacuation site, depending on the situation. Parents will be informed about pick-up procedures by the school, school board and local media.
- Elementary school main doors are locked during the school day. Visitors must use the **intercom system** to enter the building. **Staff may not be available to answer the door immediately, please be patient.** All visitors, including school volunteers, are required to **sign in** at the school office and wear **visitor identification**.
- Staff and volunteers must complete a **criminal record check** before having contact with students.
- We ask parents to contact us when their child will be absent from school as part of our **Safe Arrival** program. When we don't hear from a parent/guardian and a student is absent, we will call home to find out the reason for the absence.
- At least two staff members in every school are trained in **first aid and CPR**. All SCDSB schools **have Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs)**.

When parents are at school during a drill or emergency event, they must follow direction from school staff, police, fire and/or emergency personnel. Parents may not have immediate access to their children during drills or emergencies. They may need to wait until the situation is resolved and school staff and/or emergency personnel release students into parent care.

It's important for you to know we'll always take whatever precautions are necessary to keep our school and students safe.

## Student Dress Code

Students are expected to respect the guidelines when dressing for school. Our school is a safe space. We work to be equitable and inclusive, and understand that students may choose to express themselves through their clothing choices. Student clothing cannot pose a safety concern or conceal identity. Exceptions are granted to students who wear head coverings or other garments/objects for the purposes of religious observance, medical or sensory needs, or other reasons protected by the Ontario Human Rights Code.

The SCDSB dress code is available in the student agenda and online at [www.scdsb.on.ca](http://www.scdsb.on.ca). If you have questions about the dress code, you can contact the principal or the SCDSB Equity and Inclusion Education Team at 705-728-7570.

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

We have made it easy for parents to make their school purchases from the convenience of their own home. Whether it's lunch days, field trips or school wear, we have it online for you! Follow these three steps to get started:

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

It's safe, fast and convenient. Contact the office with any questions. **Please note that SchoolCash Online is the preferred method of payment at CHPS.**

## Parent Portal gives parents real-time access to attendance, grade information

The SCDSB Parent Portal is a secure online tool that provides parents/guardians (of students less than 18 years of age) with quick access to their children's attendance and grades and includes the option to sign up for email notifications. To access the Parent Portal, parents/guardians will need their child's SCDSB Pupil ID Number, which can be found on the Student Information Verification Form, as well as an Access ID. The Access ID will be provided in a sealed letter this fall with instructions on how to create an account. If you lose the Access ID, you can visit us in the school office and we'll provide it to you after verifying your identity.

**There are lots of ways to dress for school...**



**...but there are a few things that aren't okay.**



## **New Community Apps feature allows parents to register online and apply to volunteer**

The new SCDSB Community Apps website provides access to volunteer and community applications for our schools – you can register your child(ren) for school or apply to be a volunteer at your school. More functionality will be added in the future. You can create a "Community Account" to access these applications. Visit [communityapps.scdsb.on.ca](http://communityapps.scdsb.on.ca).



## **Ministry of Education – cell phone restrictions**

To help ensure students can focus on learning without distraction, the Ministry of Education has updated the Provincial Code of Conduct to address the use of cellphones and other personal mobile devices during instructional time, unless they are required:

- for health and medical purposes,
- to support special education needs, or
- for educational purposes, as directed by an educator.

This new requirement will come into effect provincially on Nov. 4, 2019.

The SCDSB will make the necessary revisions to our code of conduct and procedures to align with the Ministry update. This direction from the Ministry of Education aligns well with the procedures that our schools have had in place for many years. We encourage the use of board-provided and personal technology to support student learning. This reality is governed by the need to support our students with special needs, for students' health or medical purposes and in learning settings where the use of technology is directed by an educator.

The following resources from the Ministry of Education provide information and guidance to parents, guardians, educators and students about the new requirement:

- [Parents' Guide to the Provincial Code of Conduct](#) (updated)
- [Cellphones and Other Personal Mobile Devices in Schools – Questions and Answers for Parents and Guardians](#) (new)

We thank our parents/guardians for reviewing this information with your children.

*Information provided by the Ministry of Education*



### Register for Before & After School/Childcare at our school

Register now for before and after school programs/childcare. The Before and After School Program is for students in Kindergarten to Grade 6 who need care before and/or after the regular school day hours. The fees are as follows:

#### **2019-2020 Daily Fees**

**Before School Rate** \$11.00

**After School Rate** \$16.00

**Before and After School Rate** \$21.75

**Full Day Rate** (i.e. PA Day, holidays) \$39.50

Please contact the YMCA to register your child(ren).



### Safety reminder: School buses are back on the roads

As students return to school, the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC) reminds everyone that school buses are back on our roads. The majority of school buses in Simcoe County are on the road in the morning from 7 – 9:30 a.m. and again in the afternoon from 2 – 4:30 p.m. As a reminder to drivers:

- **Take caution** – Be extra cautious in the vicinity of school buses and around school bus loading and unloading zones
- **Be alert** – Watch for school bus chrome yellow colouring, flashing red lights and stop arms. Drivers travelling in both directions on a road without a median must stop for a stopped school bus that has its upper red lights flashing
- **Know the repercussions** – Any driver that fails to stop for a school bus with its lights engaged is subject to a fine of up to \$2,000 and six demerit points for a first time offence
- **Be empowered** – Anyone who witnesses a driver failing to stop for a school bus can report the incident to police.

For school bus transportation information, visit the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium's website at: [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca). Also, remember to bookmark the school bus information page at: [simcoecountyschoolbus.ca](http://simcoecountyschoolbus.ca) for bus delay and cancellation information on inclement weather days.

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

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

### **School Bus Safety Week and School Bus Driver Appreciation Day**

School Bus Safety Week takes place October 21 to 25, 2019. To support schools in promoting school bus safety to students, the Simcoe County Student Transportation Consortium (SCSTC), in partnership with school bus operators, will offer bus evacuation training to all home-to-school transported students. During this week, school bus drivers will educate students on how to evacuate a school bus safely in an emergency situation. October 23, 2019 is School Bus Driver Appreciation Day in the province of Ontario. It's a great opportunity for the school community to thank our bus drivers for all their hard work transporting students to and from school safely. For more information, visit the SCSTC website at: [main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca/](http://main.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca/).



### **October is Children's Vision Month**

Did you know that school-age children should have their eyes checked by an optometrist every year? These visits are free with an OHIP card from birth until age 19.

Young children may not know that they have a vision problem. They don't complain because they assume that everyone sees the way that they do. For parents and caregivers, there are sometimes no obvious signs or symptoms to indicate that their child has a vision problem. But if not identified early, some eye problems can permanently reduce a child's vision. This is why it's important for children to have their eyes checked by an optometrist starting at a young age.

For more information, or if you need help finding an optometrist for your child, please visit [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org/) or call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520. *Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*



### It's time to update your child's immunization record

The Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit is required to keep up to date immunization records for all students who attend elementary or secondary school in the County of Simcoe and the District of Muskoka. Parents are responsible for reporting immunizations to the health unit each time their child receives a vaccine from their health care provider. It's easy to update your child's immunization status. Go to [www.smdhu.org/immsonline](http://www.smdhu.org/immsonline) to update your child's record, or call Health Connection at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 (toll free).

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*

**October is International Walk to School Month** The Simcoe County District School Board recognizes October 2 as International Walk to School Day. Get in on the fun and be part of this worldwide event! Encourage your child or teen to walk or cycle to and from school if you live close by and team up with others to make the trip more fun. If you usually drive your child to school, try getting them to walk part of the way. If your child takes the bus, walking to and from the bus stop is a great way to add physical activity minutes into the day. Walking or cycling allows kids to enjoy the outdoors and get their recommended 60 minutes of physical activity each day. Learn more: <http://ontarioactiveschooltravel.ca/international-walk-to-school-month/>.

*Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit*

### Get active and have fun this Halloween

Halloween is just around the corner, and it's a great opportunity to get your whole family outside, explore the neighbourhood and meet people in your community. While your kids may be focused on their costumes and candy, here are five tips on how to get active and ensure a fun and safe Halloween for everyone:

- **Stay visible** - Costumes should be light-coloured with reflective stripes so that children are more easily seen at night. And remember to put reflective tape on bikes, skateboards and brooms, too!
- **Go as a group** - Don't be a spectator – join in the fun as much as possible! Take turns handing out candy at home so that everyone gets a chance to get outside. Parents can walk alongside youngsters or with other adults to casually keep an eye on older kids. A stroll around the block means more physical movement!
- **Network with neighbours** - One of the benefits of Halloween is the chance to catch up with neighbours and introduce yourself to newcomers who have recently



moved in. Parents of little ones might discover families who want to meet up for an active playdate, and school-aged kids may find a new friend they can walk or ride to school with. Having like-minded people nearby can help your family form even more healthy habits!

- **Think outside the box** - Trade the candy collected for non-edible treats such as toys or arts and crafts. Or, consider offering to buy back some of the candy, giving your kids some extra spending money at the toy store as a reward.
- **Have fun** - Collecting (and consuming) Halloween candy is fun, but the real treat is getting out there as a family and enjoying the full Halloween experience!

Visit your local [YMCA of Simcoe/Muskoka](#) for some fun Halloween activities for the whole family to enjoy. For more information visit [www.JoinTheY.ca](http://www.JoinTheY.ca).

*Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka*

### **Reminder from the Health Unit: School grounds are smoke free 24/7**

Protect yourself and your children from the health hazards of secondhand smoke. Remember, it is against the law to smoke ANYWHERE on school property at ANY TIME. This includes smoking in your vehicle while picking up or dropping off students. It is also against the law to smoke or hold lit tobacco in a vehicle carrying anyone under age 16. The fine for ignoring the law is \$250. For more information, contact the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 or visit [www.simcoemuskokahealth.org](http://www.simcoemuskokahealth.org).



### **Fire Prevention Week is Oct. 6-12**

This year's Fire Prevention Week theme, "Not Every Hero Wears a Cape. Plan and Practice Your Escape!" is aimed at educating everyone about the small but important actions they can take to keep themselves and those around them safe. If there is a fire in your home, you may have as little as one to two minutes to safely escape. Escape planning and practice can help you make the most of the time you have, giving everyone enough time to get out. Plan ahead for your escape. Make your home escape plan and practice today.



### **Have you met Sora?**

Our digital ebook/audiobook collection contains over 4,000 titles waiting to be checked out by our SCDSB students. Students simply download the app, use their SCDSB login and start reading for free on their phone or tablet. The collection can be accessed at: [meet.soraapp.com](http://meet.soraapp.com).



### Days of Awareness and Recognition taking place in October

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 October:

October	Canadian Autism Awareness Month
Oct. 1	International Coffee Day
Oct. 2	International Walk to School Day
Oct. 2	National Custodial Workers Recognition Day
Oct. 5	World Teachers' Day
Oct. 10	World Mental Health Day
Oct. 11	International Day of the Girl
Oct. 21-25	National School Bus Safety Week
Oct. 23	School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
Oct. 24	Ontario Dress Purple Day - Association of Children's Aid Societies
Oct. 24	Child Care Worker and ECE Appreciation Day

