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## February 2024 Newsletter

Dear AUPS families,

We have lots of upcoming events this month, so make sure to mark your calendars! Thank you to our School Council, our ONE student leaders, our staff and our Grade 8 team for organizing fundraisers and community events. Please see Pg 2. for details.

Our Grade 8s will also be running a Valentine's Day Dance on February 14! There will be sour keys, popcorn and bottled water available to purchase. The dance will take place during the school day. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to your classroom teacher.

Did you know? There are lots of exciting extra-curricular clubs at AUPS. We have a colouring club, a crochet club and a dance club, just to name a few. Students should keep an eye on the morning announcements to find out which clubs and sports teams they can join if they're interested.

Have a wonderful February! Sincerely,

Marci Duncan Principal

Kate Copfer Vice-Principal



#### Upcoming dates:

\*Please note that the School Council meeting scheduled for February 5 has been moved to February 12

**February 5 to February 9** -Valentine's Cookie Grams for Sale at First Break in the Front Foyer

**February 12** - Social Media and Online Safety Presentations with Paul Davis, Parent/Guardian Session @ 6:00pm

**February 12** - School Council meeting @ AUPS from 5pm to 6pm

**February 14** - Valentine's Day Dance

**February 14** - Valentine's Day Movie Night

February 15 - Talent Show

**February 16** - Report Card Day

#### Valentine's Cookie Grams

From February 5 to February 9, students can purchase a Cookie Gram from a local bakery that will be delivered to another student of their choice at a later date. Cookie Grams will be on sale in the front foyer during first break only and will cost \$2.00. The amount of cookies for sale is limited, so act fast! Thank you to our amazing School Council and ONE Student Leaders for running this fundraiser. You rock!



#### Valentine's Day Movie Night

- Wednesday, February 14, from 5:00pm to 7:30pm
- \$5.00 per student on SchoolCash Online
- Minions: Rise of Gru

The Grade 8's are holding another after school fundraising event! This event is open to students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 and will be supervised by staff and volunteers.

Students can be dropped off between 5-5:30, and can purchase from our concession stand during this time. At 5:30, we will be starting a movie in the gym. Students are welcome to bring a stuffed animal and blanket to curl up with.

No outside food or drinks will be allowed as this is a fundraising event for our grade 8 trip. We will be selling popcorn for \$2, full size chocolate bars for \$2, 2 full size sour keys for \$1 and bottled water for \$1.

Registration closes on February 9, 2024 or when we reach our maximum of 75 students, so hurry and sign up now! Visit SchoolCash Online to register.

#### Social Media and Online Safety

Join us at 6:00pm on February 12, 2024 for a Social Media and Online Safety presentation with Paul Davis! This is a free event open to all parents/guardians and is a great opportunity to learn strategies to help keep your kids safe while navigating a digital world. Anyone interested in attending can simply show up at the front doors at Alliston Union P.S. at 6:00pm, no RSVP required. We hope to see you there!



#### Valentine's Day Dance

Our Grade 8s are running a Valentine's Day Dance in the gym on February 14, 2024! Students will get to come on down to the gym and dance during the school day. There will be sour keys, popcorn and water bottles for sale. If you have any questions or concerns please reach out to your classroom teacher.



#### School Talent Show

On February 15 from 9:45am to 10:50am, parents/guardians are welcome to come visit AUPS to see our School Talent Show! Talented students from Grades 2 to 8 will be participating. Get ready to be amazed!



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 <u>www.simcoecountyschoolbus.ca</u>. Our school is in the <u>South zone</u>. 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 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 <u>@SCSTC\_SchoolBus</u> for bus cancellations and other information. You can also subscribe to receive bus delay notifications here: <u>https://scstc.ca/Subscriptions/Login.aspx</u>.

#### Snow Day Attendance Procedures

On days where school busses are cancelled, you may receive an automated Safe Arrival phone call if your student(s) is/are not at school, regardless of whether they are a bus student or not. **Parents/ guardians** <u>do not</u> need to report student absences on bus cancellation days. The purpose of this automated phone call is to notify parents/guardians that their children are not at school for safe-ty reasons.

On regular school days, parents/guardians are expected to report student absences via our Safe Arrival line at 1-888-885-8065 or by emailing our attendance inbox at aluattendance@scdsb.on.ca. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to call the school office. Thank you!



#### 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.

## 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: <u>www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten</u>.





#### 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: <u>https://www.scdsb.on.ca/community/community\_connects</u>.

#### Grade 8 transitions to Secondary School

As students progress from elementary school to secondary school, important personal student information is shared, which eases each student's transition to secondary school.

Sharing this information also improves our ability to program effectively to benefit all students. The collection and use of personal student information for such purposes are 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 Matthew Webbe, Superintendent of Education, if you would like more information about the transition process at Alliston Union Public School.

#### Subscribe to Kindergarten Connections!

Will your child be turning four in 2024? If so, the SCDSB invites you to Kindergarten Connections! This is a monthly enewsletter informing families of everything they need to know about preparing their child for school, as well as registering them for Kindergarten in the SCDSB. To learn more and subscribe, visit the Kindergarten page on the SCDSB website: <a href="https://www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten">www.scdsb.on.ca/kindergarten</a>.

#### Parents' Guide to Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting

Learn to navigate the world of assessment, evaluation, and reporting with this new guide for parents/ guardians. Created to support parents'/guardians' understanding of assessment, this guide was designed to effectively empower you to actively engage in your child's educational journey. The guide has been posted to the Simcoe County District School Board's website and can be accessed at <u>https://cdnsm5-ss14.sharpschool.com/UserFiles/Servers/Server\_210898/File/Secondary/Parents-Guide-to-Assessment.pdf</u>

#### How is your infant, toddler, or preschool child developing?

Is your child meeting their milestones? Age-appropriate speech and language skills are critical to your child's ability to read, write, and be successful in school as well as to their ability to engage with their peers. Free services are available to support you with your child's development. Preschool speech and language programs are located across the County of Simcoe. Call 705-739-5696 or 1-800 -675-1979 to complete a developmental screen. The earlier we work together the better!





#### EarlyON Child and Family Centres

The foundation for lifelong learning and health is built in the early years. EarlyON Child and Family Centres across Simcoe County offer programs for children prenatal to six years of age and their parents/guardians and caregivers. They offer access to play- and inquiry-based learning supported by *How Does Learning Happen?* Ontario's pedagogy for the early years, information on child development and devel-

opmental screening including Early Referral Identification Kits (ERIK), parent/guardian education, referrals to community resources, nutrition information, and post-natal resources. Check with your local EarlyON provider: <u>https://linktr.ee/earlyonsimcoe</u>.

#### 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, thirdparty 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. <u>Please contact the child care operator directly to discuss fees and to</u> <u>register. For more information and contact numbers, please visit: https://www.scdsb.on.ca/</u> <u>elementary/planning\_for\_school/childcare\_before\_after</u>.

#### 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:

Feb. 8, 2024Self regulation for kidsFeb. 22, 2024Self regulation for teensMarch 28, 2024Building parents' resiliencyApril 18, 2024Vaping, 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: <u>https://bit.ly/3jGaC74</u>.

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.

#### **Transition planning**

Feb. 13 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. **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: <a href="http://www.scdsb.on.ca/elementary/special\_education/

#### Developing fluency through repeated reading

Fluency, the ability to read smoothly, accurately, and with expression, is a fundamental skill that significantly impacts a child's overall reading proficiency. When children read fluently, they can focus more on comprehension, understanding the meaning behind the words, rather than struggling with decoding.

Repeated reading is a highly effective strategy that involves a child reading the same text multiple times. This method aims to enhance fluency, comprehension, and overall reading proficiency. By

revisiting a text, readers become more familiar with the words and structure, leading to increased speed and accuracy. Additionally, repeated reading allows children to focus on expression and intonation, promoting a more natural and engaging reading style. This approach is particularly beneficial for struggling readers, as it builds confidence and reinforces word recognition. As parents/guardians, incorporating repeated reading into your child's routine not only reinforces the joy of

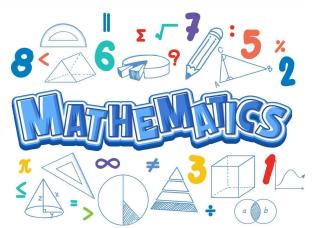


reading but also cultivates a strong foundation for improved fluency and comprehension skills over time.

#### New Math at Home online resource for families

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) Math team is excited to launch Math at Home, an online resource for parents/caregivers of SCDSB students from ages 0-16. Math at Home provides the following information and resources to support math learning:

- Math games to play at home
- Links to digital math g ames
- Practice opportunities
- Real world math connections
- Math mindset



Math at Home will be updated monthly to include new math games, problems, and number talks. Visit <u>www.scdsb.on.ca/MathAtHome</u> to begin supporting your child's math learning at home!

#### Math @Home parent and caregiver series

It's back! The SCDSB math team is pleased to offer three virtual sessions for parents and caregivers of SCDSB students. These sessions will 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.

#### Exploring the new SCDSB family math resources

#### Tuesday, Feb. 6, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers. Join members of the SCDSB math team for a guided exploration of the new SCDSB family math resources. Participants will have the opportunity to explore the resources that are available to support their child's math learning at home. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the resources available.

#### Tips for engaging in math conversations with your child @Home

#### Wednesday, Feb. 28, 2024, 7 to 8 p.m.

This session is for parents and caregivers and will explore opportunities to discuss math with their child(ren) at home. Participants will learn about how events such as shopping, preparing food, engaging in a building project, or going for a walk can be used as a starting point for math conversations, and will receive prompts to get the discussion rolling. The guided portion of the session will be 45 minutes in length. During the final 15 minutes, the math team will be available to answer questions about the session.

#### 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 for the sessions they wish to attend. 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: <u>https://bit.ly/24MathAtHome</u>.

#### Registration now open for summer eLearning!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school courses in July 2024 (elearning) and travel for credit courses in both July and August 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 <u>https://www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer\_school</u>.

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, please visit: <u>www.edutravelforcredit.com</u>.

#### Summer eLearning opportunities for students entering Grade 9!

The Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) is offering summer school eLearning courses in July 2024. Current Grade 8 students wishing to reach ahead and earn a credit before high school can now register through their elementary school principal. eLearning is fully supported by certified teachers who are available electronically daily. Available courses include:

CGC1D – Grade 9 Geography

PAF10 – Grade 9 Personal Fitness

CHV2O & GLC2O – Grade 10 Civics and Careers

CHC2P – Grade 10 Applied History

CHC2D – Grade 10 Academic History



Summer school program details can be found on the Learning Centres website at <u>www.thelearningcentres.com/programs/summer\_school</u>.

#### Mental health strategy of the month - Just Breathe

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 *Just Breathe*. The purpose of this strategy is to help students develop a mind/body connection, self-regulation, awareness of emotions, and resiliency by practising deep breathing.

To practice *Just Breathe* at home, follow these steps:

- Place your hands flat on your stomach or pay attention to your stomach.
- As you breathe deeply in through your nose, send this breath all the way to your stomach.
- Feel your stomach expand and your hands move out.
- Breathe out. Feel your stomach contract and your hands move in.
- Repeat 5-6 times.

Practice deep belly breathing any time you feel stressed or upset. Find more information to support your child's mental health here: <u>https://smho-smso.ca/parents-and-caregivers/</u>.

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

#### Online luring and grooming

As part of our shared commitment to educating our students about digital citizenship and cyber awareness, this month we are highlighting online luring and grooming. The following info sheet has been created by the Educational Collaborative Network of Ontario (ECNO) to overview:

- What online luring and grooming is
- Commonly used tactics that online predators use
- Helpful tips to stay safe
- How to report if necessary

#### Info sheet: <u>https://ecno.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/</u> ECNO-CAM-Calendar-23-Aug3023\_GroomingLuring.pdf



For additional activities and information, please refer to the digital citizenship resources for parents/ guardians that are available on the Safe Schools page on the SCDSB website (<u>www.scdsb.on.ca/</u> <u>elementary/safe\_schools</u>). The Ministry of Education has also provided information and resources in PPM 166 Keeping Students Safe: Policy Framework for School Board Anti-Sex Trafficking Protocols: <u>www.ontario.ca/document/education-ontario-policy-and-program-direction/policyprogram-</u> <u>memorandum-166</u>.

#### Foster families needed in your community!

Children in our community need you! We have an urgent need for foster homes in Simcoe Muskoka. We are looking for diverse foster care providers who understand children's needs. Our 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 <u>https://familyconnexions.ca/fosterconnexions/</u> to inquire, apply, and for more information. You may also call 705-726-6587 ext. 4.

Information provided by Simcoe Muskoka Family Connexions.



#### Stay healthy this school year

COVID and other respiratory infections can spread easily from person to person. These germs can spread quickly when someone coughs or sneezes directly on another person, or when germs land on hard surfaces like doorknobs, desks, and 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 is wash your hands. Wash with soap and warm run-

ning water for at least 15 seconds (or try singing Happy Birthday twice). If your hands are not visibly dirty you can use alcohol-based hand sanitizer for 15 seconds. Also, make sure you are up to date with your immunizations, cover coughs and sneezes, 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 <u>www.simcoemuskokahealth.org</u>.

Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.

#### Creating safe and healthy schools

A healthy school supports children to reach their full health and learning potential. There are many ways for you to get involved in creating a safe and healthy school for your child. Here are some ideas:

- Talk with your child about what they are learning at school and find ways to role model or reinforce the health messages at home.
- Stay informed about your child's school through the school website and social media platforms.
- Get to know your child's friends, other parents, and staff from the school and communicate of ten.
- Volunteer to participate on a committee that helps organize healthy activities for the school community. Contact your child's school or your local public health unit to get started.

Looking for more parenting support? Speak with a public health nurse by calling 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 or visit <u>www.simcoemuskokahealth.org</u>. *Information provided by the Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit.* 

#### Register your child for the YMCA's Escape in the Landscape program

Register your child for an outdoor education experience like no other. The YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka's Escape in the Landscape program offers nature immersion activities led by qualified staff for children ages 4-12. Through experimentation, peer-to-peer learning, and storytelling, your child will be encouraged to discover new experiences and skills, all while making lasting friendships and developing a love of the great outdoors.

During this memorable program, your child will:

- Learn about the land and how to be environmental caretakers.
- Connect with nature and build self-confidence.
- Improve their mental and physical health.

Be curious, resilient, and motivated to make a difference.

The program runs for eight weeks from March to April 2024 and is offered in Alliston, Innisfil, Midland, Wasaga Beach, and Barrie.

Cost: Ages 4-6: \$125.00 Ages 7-12: \$175.00

For more information and to register, visit <u>https://</u> ymcaofsimcoemuskoka.ca/ escape-in-the-landscape/.

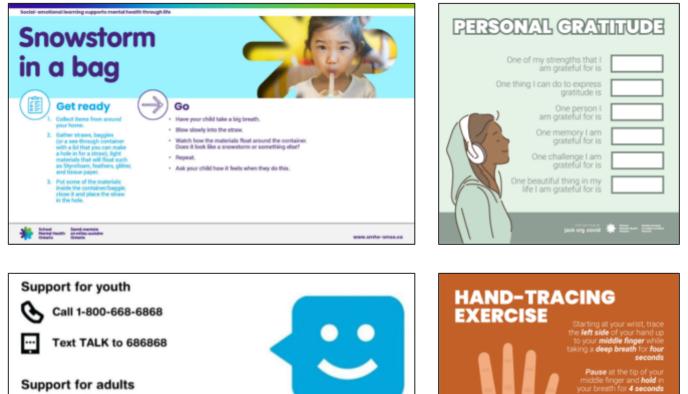
Information provided by the YMCA of Simcoe Muskoka.





There is a lot of joy and happiness associated with the festive season, but for some it may not always be a positive time. The shorter days, colder temperatures and the pressures associated with this time of year can impact many people, adults and young people alike. Check out the resources below to promote positive mental health throughout the winter break.

- Focus on what gives you joy and meaning
- Use your imagination, get lost in a book, try a new game, or make the most of the winter weather and get outside
- Show gratitude to ourselves and others giving and receiving thanks helps everyone feel better
- Sleep well, hydrate often and move your body



One Stop (alk

··· Text WELLNESS to 741741

To connect with a clinician, visit OneStopTalk.ca or call 1.855.416.8255







School Mental Health Ontario Santé mentale en milieu scolaire Ontario

## **SCDSB Days of Awareness**

Feb. 1-29	Black History Month
Feb. 1	World Hijab Day
Feb. 1-2	Imbolc (Wicca)
Feb. 2	Groundhog Day
	World Wetlands Day
Feb. 4	World Cancer Day
Feb. 6	Isra'a and Mi'raj (Islam)
Feb. 10	Losar/Tibetan New Year (Buddhism)
	Lunar New Year/Maitreya Bodhisattva's Birthday (Buddhism)
Feb. 11	International Day of Women and Girls in Science
Feb. 14	Ash Wednesday (Christianity)
	Valentines Day
	Vasant Panchami (Hinduism)
Feb. 15	National Flag of Canada Day
	Nirvana Day (Buddhism, Jainism)
Feb. 17	Random Acts of Kindness Day
Feb. 19	Family Day
Feb. 20	World Day of Social Justice
Feb. 24	Magha/Sangha Day (Buddhism)
Feb. 24-25	Mid-Sha'ban (Islam)
Feb. 26 – March 1	Ayyám-i-Há/Intercalary Days (Bahá'í)
Feb. 28	Pink Shirt Day (Anti-Bullying Day)
Feb. 29	Rare Diseases Day

#### 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, positive identity affirming experiences and opportunities for Black students, staff, and parents/guardians, and to creating a safe and caring learning envi-



ronment that promotes the human rights of students, staff, 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 and celebrating Black excellence.

#### Reminder: Safe Arrival system for SCDSB schools – call 1-888-885-8065 to report an absence

This school year, the Simcoe County District School Board (SCDSB) launched a new Safe Arrival system at elementary schools. This system supports us in continuing to improve our home-to-school communication process and streamlines absence reporting. **To report a student absence, call 1-888-885-8065**. Callers will be prompted to identify the school before leaving a message. Parents/ guardians should include the student's name, teachers' name, dates, and reason for the absence. When schools do not hear from a parent/guardian, and a student is absent, the school will call home to find out the reason for the absence. If you have questions about the system, please contact the school office.

# **February 2024**

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1	2	3
4	5 Cookie Grams for Sale All Week	6	7	8	9	10
11	12 Online Safety Presen- tation, School Council meet- ing	13	14 Valentine's Day Dance, Valentine's Movie Night	15 School Tal- ent Show	16 Report Card Day	17
18 []	19 Jolidayf O Schooll	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29		
Supervision Begins: 9:10						
Supervision Begins:9:10First Bell:9:25First Nutrition Break:11:05-11:45Second Nutrition Break:1:25-2:50Dismissal:3:45			Fe O	rny v	acentin	e
	Μ	erci	-		Child	
Merci Thank You!						