



# SIMCOE COMPOSITE SCHOOL

## February 2025

40 Wilson Drive  
Simcoe, ON  
N3Y2E5  
519-426-4664

### Principal

Jennifer Ippolito

### Vice-Principal

Eric Stigter

### Office Coordinator

Megan Allen

### Student Services Head

Kelly Stromme

### Specialized Services Head

Jenn Reid

### Student Success Teacher

Rebecca Vanbentham

## From the Principal

Hello, parents and guardians. Semester 1 has now come and gone and I can't help but feel a huge sense of pride in everything we accomplished since the end of summer. What a vibrant and amazing school SCS is, as this partial list of activities and events indicates:

**September** - Back-to-School Dance, SCS Family BBQ, Gr. 9 Day, National Day of Truth & Reconciliation observances

**October** - Two pep rallies, Young Canada Day at Norfolk County Fair (bringing us a back-to-back win for Top Overall School!), Commencement for the Class of 2024, Junior Awards Night, Parent-Teacher Night, Coffee House, a Halloween Carnival, Learning Support Day, championship football game against Delhi

**November** - Take our Kid to Work Day, Gr. 8 Day, Pathways Night, Holiday Treats for Our Troops campaign, Remembrance Day Assembly

**December** - Annual Holiday Concerts, Feeder School Music visits, Semi-Formal Dance, Turkey Dinner, Year-end Assembly and Holiday Activities

**January** - Future Grade 9 Night, Culminating Activities, Final Exams

And this synopsis doesn't even include most of the sporting events, trips, other Students' Council initiatives, and a variety of club events that have occurred here since September!

In terms of academics, our students continue to work hard to fulfill their graduation requirements. Grade 9s with Math in first semester wrote EQAO and achieved incredible results, while Grade 10s in English wrote the literacy test (OSSLT). Good news: both groups earned high scores, our best ever! I also know that at the moment, students of all grade levels are busy considering and choosing their courses for next year...

The arrival of Semester 2 means a fresh start and a new beginning for everyone. While exciting to many, others may find such change uncomfortable, so please reach out if your youth needs support. The SCS team is always ready to serve you and your family however we can.

With a proper Canadian winter now upon us, please stay warm and stay in touch with us about all things school-related. Looking forward to a great second semester, Sabres!

Mrs. Ippolito  
jennifer.ippolito@granderie.ca

## From the Vice-Principal

Dear Parents and Guardians,

As the new Vice-Principal, I have truly felt welcomed into the school community. The strong sense of family and belonging here at SCS is something special, and I am grateful to be part of it. Thank you for your ongoing support in helping us create a positive and engaging environment for our students.

A reminder to please use the Parent Portal Safe Arrivals system to report an absence, which helps us ensure accurate attendance; prioritize student safety; streamline communication; and reduce time spent making calls home. Additionally, please speak with your child about the importance of arriving to class on time, since punctuality is a key part of student success. Of course, attendance also plays a vital role, so we encourage families to reinforce the importance of being present and engaged in class every day.

Beyond academics, we also invite students to explore extracurricular activities this semester. Whether through sports teams, clubs, or leadership opportunities, extracurriculars help students develop valuable skills, build friendships, and create a stronger sense of belonging to our school community. Students can find information about extracurriculars on the SCS website and by listening to daily announcements.

Thank you for your ongoing support. I look forward to continuing to work together to make this school year a great one!

Mr. Stigter  
eric.stigter@granderie.ca



## From the Main Office

Friendly reminder from your Attendance Secretaries:

When notifying the office of your student's attendance, please be sure to call us in advance and leave a message on the attendance line OR - better yet - use the Safe Arrivals app as soon as you know of an upcoming absence.

To allow for minimal class interruptions, if your student needs to be excused early for an appointment that day, please notify the office in the morning so a notation can be made in the attendance record.

We appreciate your help in keeping your students' class time uninterrupted.

The Safe Arrivals app can be found on Android and Apple. Please call the office if you have questions on how to navigate the app.

Thank you in advance for following these procedures to help the Main Office function as smoothly as possible. We appreciate the support!

## From Student Services

### Course Selections

Students are now completing course selections for next school year using myBlueprint.

<https://education.myblueprint.ca/granderie9-12>

Course selection instruction presentations for students can be found in SCS Guidance Brightspace page. Classes will be brought to the computer lab the week of February 10 to help with any last minute problem solving and to submit choices. When students submit course selections a confirmation email is sent to parents/guardians for final approval. **The deadline for submission is Friday, February 14.**

Grade 12 students NOT returning must still go to myBlueprint to indicate their plans. Grade 12 students planning to return to SCS next year can submit course requests in myBlueprint.

### BrightSpace Guidance Page

The "SCS Guidance Office" folder in BrightSpace is something all students should check regularly and "pin" to the top of their personal page. This is where Student Services staff regularly post/share information about courses (in-school, e-Learning, and Summer School); apprenticeship, college & university opportunities/applications/open houses/etc.; graduates' awards, scholarships, and bursaries; opportunities to earn Community Hours; paid part-time student employment ads; special events happening at the school and in the wider community; and more.

### Summer School

Summer School course information / registration forms will be released by Grand Erie and be available online and in our office at SCS sometime in May.

### Community Hours

Students are required to perform 40 Community Service Hours in order to graduate. Forms to detail and track these hours are available in the Main Office, Guidance Office, and on Grand Erie's homepage; once completed, they are to be submitted to the Main Office.

### Online Learning Graduation Requirement Opt-out

Students are required to earn two online learning credits to graduate from secondary school, beginning with every student who entered Grade 9 in the 2020-21 school year. Meeting the online learning graduation requirement should not pose a barrier to graduation for students. Parents /guardians may choose to opt their child out of the mandatory online courses required for graduation by completing the link below:

<https://granderie.ca/secondary/elearning/elearning-opt-out>

Paper forms are also available in the Guidance Office.

### School Mental Health Ontario

Ontario's new "By Your Side" mental health support program is designed to support families with a toolkit centred on education and strategies to promote positive mental health and well-being. Please visit the website for more information: <https://smho-smso.ca/parents-and-caregivers/>

Please direct Guidance-related questions to Department Head Mrs. Stromme at [Kelly.stromme@granderie.ca](mailto:Kelly.stromme@granderie.ca) ; Mr. Dale at [Jason.dale@granderie.ca](mailto:Jason.dale@granderie.ca) ; or Mrs. Busk at [Anne.busk@granderie.ca](mailto:Anne.busk@granderie.ca)

## Students' Council Update

During Semester 1, Students' Council helped fund and operate a number of activities: Grade 9 Day, the Back-to-School Dance and Community BBQ, Young Canada Day competitions at Norfolk County Fair, Hallowe'en Carnival & school decorations, Remembrance Day assembly & wreath-laying at the Carillon Tower (Norfolk's War Memorial), the annual "Holiday Treats for our Troops" campaign, and numerous December holiday events (festive decorating around the school, Hot Chocolate & Cookie Day in the CAF, the annual Food Bank Food Drive, etc.).

Council also subsidized school trips, sports teams, the Music Department's various endeavours, the SCS Chess Club & Cookie Club, and much more.

Note: the annual Student Activity Fee generates the Students' Council's Operating Budget to help fund all of these (and many more) in-school activities, so thanks to all who have contributed. Those who have yet to pay this year's fee, please see Mrs. Allen in the Main Office OR use School Cash Online to do so.

For February's Black History Month, our "morning music" will include songs reflecting contributions made to society by black artists of the past and present. We'll recognize giants of Jazz, Ella Fitzgerald and Louis Armstrong; pioneers of Rock & Roll Chuck Berry, Little Richard, and Tina Turner; and icons from Aretha Franklin to Bob Marley and beyond.

Carnations and candygrams will be sold in the CAF at lunch during the first two weeks of Semester 2, with items to be delivered to homerooms on Friday, Feb. 14 (Valentine's Day).

Weekly meetings of your Students' Council take place in Mrs. Nix's room during the lunch period. All students and staff are welcome to attend.

The election of the next Students' Council will take place in May, with candidates' forms made available in advance.



## From the Learning Commons

The newly-renovated Learning Commons is open from 8:30 - 3:30, providing a safe, friendly environment and offering a balanced collection of print and digital resources to meet both curricular and personal interest needs. Feature collections include Mental Health and Wellness, Indigenous fiction and non-fiction, LGBTQ+ resources, Travel & Tourism, and more.

Tablets are available for assignment completion, e-learning course work, database inquiries and/or internet research. The charging station allows students to rapidly top up their devices (phones, earbuds, etc.) in a safe, locked space while in class. A printer/copier is available to all.

Students on "spare" or taking e-learning courses may use the Learning Commons to complete their work. Students may sign out books, puzzles, or games for school and personal use. Staff or students can also book a quiet meeting space, bigger classroom space, or the new green screen room for creating digital video assignments.

The Learning Commons also features new "teaming tables," allowing small groups to collaborate, share their work or ideas, and use the "write on" tabletops or full connectivity monitors to allow screen sharing. Café-style seating provides space where students may snack, eat, drink, or enjoy lunch while reading, studying, or chatting with friends.

Those looking for a break may relax on the curved sofa or in one of four comfy club chairs. Creative types can visit the Makerspace or Activity area to build something on our Lego wall; work on a puzzle; play a board game or cards; use the sewing machine or Cricut machine; and more.

The new Library Learning Commons is definitely THE place to be at SCS - just **DON'T FORGET TO SIGN IN AT THE CIRCULATION DESK**, please!



## Fall Sports Season

**Tennis** - NSSAA Champs Paige Lingard (Singles) and Holly Van Netten & Evan Bradacs (Mixed Doubles) competed at CWOSSA

**Golf** - Avery Gallagher came 5th at CWOSSA

**Girls Basketball** - Juniors and Seniors made the playoffs

**Boys Volleyball** - Juniors and Seniors made the playoffs

**Football** - the team went undefeated during the season, winning the Mud Jug for a 3-peat, but coming up a bit short in the AABHN Cup championship

**Baseball** - our team had some wins and competed well at the AABHN semi-finals

**Cross-Country** - 1st Place finish in the Secondary Road Race helped SCS win the Top Overall School title; team members blew past personal bests at CWOSSA

**Cheerleading** - 3rd Place finish at Norfolk County Fair; team is currently practicing/preparing for the 2nd Annual Norfolk Cheer Competition as well as OFSAA



## Winter Sports Season

**Swim Team** - several individual swimmers and relay teams finished 1st overall at AABHN; five individuals qualified to compete at CWOSSA in February, with their sights on OFSAA

**Curling** - our young team of seasoned curlers + five enthusiastic newcomers won a game at their first bonspiel in January; they plan to "hurry hard" at both upcoming bonspiels in February

**Others** - the Girls' volleyball, Boys' basketball, and Girls' hockey teams are practicing hard to represent SCS in the AABHN playoffs happening in February.

## Spring Sports Information

Spring sport teams will be having their try-outs before March Break. Interested students should listen to announcements for these dates and times or see any Phys-Ed teacher for further information on our many Spring teams.

The Phys-Ed department welcomes adult volunteer coaches from the community. Parents or guardians, please make contact with us if you or someone you know would consider helping the Sabre sports community out in this way.

There are also many opportunities for students to earn their required Community Hours during our various tournaments and event days. Students, please see a Phys-Ed teacher if you are interested in volunteering during Semester 2.

Go, Sabres!



## French Department Update

### Full French Immersion!

Extended French at SCS began in the Fall of 2020 and has been gaining momentum ever since. The success of the program and a commitment by Grand Erie District School Board has led to this moment: officially expanding our program from Extended French to French Immersion for students enrolling this Fall! Sounds exciting, but what does that mean? It means students will be getting 3 more French courses throughout their high school experience, bringing the total to 10 of 30 secondary courses taught in the French language, and preparing them even more to take the DELF exam (the international assessment of French language proficiency) at the end of Grade 12.

### Carnaval Field Trip

From February 13-16, fifty students and five staff will experience the wonder that is Carnaval in Quebec City! Activities include a visit to the ice hotel, touring city landmarks, playing in the snow, engaging in Carnaval-based festivities such as the closing parade, eating traditional Québécois foods, hopefully giving the Bonhomme a high-five, and much more!

### Missy D Concert

On Monday, April 14, SCS has the honour of hosting Missy D, winner of the 2024 "Francophone Artist of the Year" award! Missy D is a bilingual hip-hop, rap, and soul artist. She will be unleashing her high-energy rap on students from SCS and other community schools, tackling themes of identity, community, and belonging. The concert at SCS begins at 12:30. **Please contact French teacher Madame Edwards at [marlena.l.edwards@granderie.ca](mailto:marlena.l.edwards@granderie.ca) for more information.**

## From the Music Department

Semester 1 was very busy for our award-winning school bands and Music students, as always, with involvement in events including:

Norfolk County Fair Stage performances

"Gentlemen of Harmony" A Capella Singing Workshop

Fall Coffee House

Performing at our Class of 2024 Commencement, Remembrance Day Service, and Holiday Assembly

Festive "Holiday Roadshow" Concerts at local elementary schools

Annual SCS Holiday Concert (two evening shows!)



## Annual March Break Trips

This year's March Break adventure (just a few weeks away!) will take two-dozen Sabres to the ancient sites and other spectacular attractions of sunny Greece.

Note: mandatory pre-departure meeting for students and one parent/guardian on Thursday, February 20, 6:30 pm in the Learning Commons.

Although next year's trip to France, Belgium & The Netherlands has been sold out since last Spring, the 2027 itinerary will be announced and opened for registration this April/May. Why so early? Because opening trips two years in advance allows students to lock in pricing at today's rates; receive an early registration discount from the tour company; and spread smaller monthly payments over a longer period, making tours more affordable to more people. Please note that space on the annual SCS Eurotrip is limited and typically fills soon after "Spring launch."

Please contact Mr. Dale, Lead Chaperone, at [Jason.dale@granderie.ca](mailto:Jason.dale@granderie.ca) for more information about these adventurous, educational, and unforgettable "trips of a lifetime."





## From the Math Department

The Math department is dedicated to the success of every student. We provide many opportunities for students to improve their level of success. One way is by providing a **MATH HELP ROOM** every day at lunch. For the most part, every teacher in the department can be available at lunch, but if a student's individual teacher is not available, there is always another Math teacher available to help them. Students may bring their lunch.

Math EQAO tests were written by all Grade 9 (1W) Math students in January for Semester 1 and will be held in June for Semester 2 courses. Congratulations to all Grade 9 Math students who worked to be successful on the test and to the staff who helped prepare them. We're looking forward to replicating our very strong Semester 1 results this term!

SCS takes part in the Waterloo Math Contests each Spring. This year, Grade 9, 10 and 11 students will write the contest on Wed. Feb. 26th and Grade 12's will write on Wed. April 2nd. If you have a Sabre who likes a Math challenge, they should see Mrs. Van De Wiele in early February to sign up and get and practice test. Mrs. Van De Wiele will call and hold a meeting about these Math contests at lunch during the first week of Semester 2, so please listen for the announcements!



## After School Support

The drop-in After School Program is offered to ALL STUDENTS. It runs Monday - Thursday from 3 - 4 pm in the Learning Commons. Two SCS staff with various subject area expertise oversee the program, one of whom is a Math/Science teacher, the other a Geography/Student Success Teacher.

Students may drop in seeking help from the teacher on duty OR simply make good use of the Learning Commons space and its resources while working independently or doing quiet study, either alone or in a small group.

## Annual Spring Bus Trip

From April 24-27, this year's annual "BIG City, USA" bus trip - offered and chaperoned by our Technologies Department - will lead Sabres on a thrilling, jam-packed visit to New York City. Students will enjoy a city tour of highlights such as the Empire State Building, Central Park, Macy's, Madison Square Garden, Statue of Liberty, Chinatown, the Financial District, etc.; visit the Harry Potter store; have dinner at Ellen's Stardust Diner; take in a Broadway musical; do the RiseNY immersive flight-over-Manhattan simulator ride; and more.

Talk about getting your money's worth!

Interested students should see Lead Chaperone Mrs. Busk at school for more information or reach out by email at [Anne.busk@granderie.ca](mailto:Anne.busk@granderie.ca)



## SCS Social Media

To stay updated on SCS events, students and parents are encouraged to follow our social media pages on Instagram ([scssabres](#) & [scs\\_studentco](#)) and Facebook (Simcoe Composite Excalibur & Simcoe Composite School Parent Community).

## Looking Ahead

- February 5 - SCS Apparel purchase deadline
- Feb. 7/8 - Sabre Shoot-out event
- Feb. 10-14 - Sports Tournament Week
- Feb. 13-16 - Quebec City Carnival trip
- Feb. 14 - Course Selection deadline for next year's classes
- Feb. 17 - Family Day holiday
- Feb. 19 - Bands at Golden Horseshoe Festival
- Feb. 20 (daytime) - Grad Photo retakes
- Feb. 20 (evening) - Greece Trip pre-departure meeting (6:30)
- Feb. 27 - Bands at Norfolk Music & Arts Festival
  
- March 5 - 14 - Eurotrip 2025 to Greece
- March 10 - 14 - March Break
- March 26 - Chess Club hosting Elementary chess tourney
- March 26 - 28 - Winter Coffee House date tbd
  
- April 10 - Student Support Day
- April 11 - Spring PD Day
- April 16 - Semester 2 Parent-Teacher Night
- April 24 - 27 - New York City trip
- April 30 - Track & Field Day
  
- May 7 - Grand Erie's Rainbow Ball