



# THE BULLDOG

A Newsletter for Our Bur Oak Secondary School Community

VOL. 1, ISSUE 19

FEBRUARY 9, 2024

This newsletter will be sent out weekly and will share important information to all of you, our valued members of our school community. We encourage you to also visit our [school website](#) regularly. Previously sent newsletters can be accessed from our website [here](#). And, feel free to use [Google Translate](#) to support with multi-language translation, as needed.

## Daily Schedule

**Period 1**(includes Homeroom) 8:15-9:35

**Period 2** 9:40-10:55

**Period 3** 11:00-12:15

**Period 4** 12:20- 1:35

**Period 5** 1:40-2:55

## Important Dates Ahead

### February 2024

**13:** Caring & Safe Schools Assembly - per 1/2 (Caf)

**14:** Spirit Day

**15:** Course Fair Period 1

**19:** Family Day (No School)

**28:** Math Contests: Pascal, Cayley, Fermat

## OSSLT (Fall administration)

Individual Student Reports for the Fall 2023-2024 administration of the Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT) are now available and have been distributed to students. Any reports that have not been picked up are available in the main office.

Students who have successfully completed the OSSLT will have this noted on their Provincial Report Card and on the Ontario Student Transcript.

The next opportunity to write the test will be this spring (March-April). The Ontario Secondary School Literacy Course may be available for some student who have been unsuccessful. Students must meet the secondary school literacy requirements in order to receive an OSSD.



*We wish you and your family a very Happy New Year!*

## **2024 Black History Month Events for YRDSB**

Here is the external link for the events (below) where Parents and community can find the registration form or information, at the YRDSB Centre for Black Excellence.

[External Link for Feb 2024 YRDSB Community events](#)

## **Caring and Safe Schools Presentations for Semester 2**

To support and promote positive student behaviour, students will attend the Caring and Safe Schools Mid-Year Presentations. These presentations underscore behaviour expectations as we create a caring, safe, and inclusive school environment. As families are critical partners, please continue discussing school safety at home by asking your child what they have learned in the Caring and Safe Schools Mid-Year Presentation.

Presentation topics include:

- YRDSB and School Code of Conduct (including items that are not to be brought to school)
- Staying safe online
- Progressive discipline, and
- Standing up for each other, including methods of reporting incidents of racism, discrimination and bullying.

## **Promoting Behaviour**

In the Mid-Year Presentation, students learn about following the YRDSB and the School Code of Conduct. Instances of anti-Black racism, other forms of racism, discrimination and bullying are not acceptable and are addressed through progressive discipline. In some cases of racism and discrimination, York Regional Police may be involved.

Students will also be reminded about safe school behaviours, including what items must never be brought to school, such as peanut products, vape products/drug paraphernalia, weapons/replica weapons and knives/replica knives.

## Reporting Behaviour

Standing up for one another and reporting when something does not feel safe is part of a caring and safe school environment. Students should report incidents that make them or others feel unsafe or uncomfortable, including acts of racism, discrimination and bullying. Students can report incidents by:

Telling a caring adult;

Using the YRDSB's "[Report It Button](#)" (Located on our school's website, the online Report It button allows students and families to share information about inappropriate behaviour and incidents of hate or discrimination. Please see [this video](#) for additional information);

Contacting [Kids Help Phone](#) (1-800-668-6868).



## Mental Health

We will stress the importance of connection to students as we continue the school year. Students are learning about who they can talk to if they need support. In addition, positive mental health is closely tied to each individual's sense of identity and safety. As such, mental health initiatives are aligned with equity and safety in mind, which includes culturally specific supports. YRDSB student mental health services are delivered by Board social work and psychology staff. These services are accessible through the school principal. [Mental health resources for families](#) are also available on the Board website.

## Student Discipline

We use a progressive discipline approach for inappropriate behaviour on and off school property. This means we consider various options to determine the most appropriate response to each situation to help students learn from their choices. In some cases, suspension or expulsion may be necessary. The Ontario Education Act and the Board's Caring and Safe Schools Policy (found on the [Board's Caring and Safe School Page](#)) outline situations where suspension and expulsion must be considered. These infractions are also outlined in the Guide to the School Year. In addition, when inappropriate behaviour occurs, information will be shared with the student(s) who were harmed and the families of the student(s) who were harmed to the extent that legislation allows.

## Tobacco/Alcohol/Drug-Free Environment

The use of tobacco, electronic products (such as [vaping, electronic cigarettes](#) and related products) and student possession of alcohol/illegal and restricted drugs, including cannabis, are prohibited on school property or within 20 metres of school boundaries. This complies with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act, enforced locally by York Region Community and Health Services. A progressive form of discipline may apply, including suspension from school and fines (up to \$5,000). In accordance with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act (SFOA), exceptions are made for the traditional use of tobacco that forms part of Indigenous culture and spirituality.

## **Online Safety and Appropriate Use of Technology**

Students are reminded about the Appropriate Use of Technology agreement, including the importance of using respectful language and making positive choices when using electronic communications and social media tools. This agreement is also included in the start-up package that all families receive at the beginning of the year.

Students are reminded that online threats and comments are taken seriously and may have consequences, including potential criminal charges. Where there are concerns for the safety of students, staff, community members or Board property, the school board works with York Regional Police and appropriate actions are taken. The safety and well-being of students remain our top priority.

### **For More Information**

For more details on these items, please read the Guide to the School Year or visit the [Caring and Safe Schools](#) section on the YRDSB website for more information and to access family resources to continue these conversations at home.

Thank you for helping us create a caring, safe, and inclusive school community.

## **Information from our Guidance Department**

### Course Selection

Students will be able to submit their 2024-25 course selection in my-Blueprint beginning on February 15. Course selection closes on February 23 @ 4pm.

### Course Fair

On Thursday February 15 during period 1, students in grades 9-11 will have the opportunity to visit our course fair being held in our cafeteria and atrium. This fair will feature all departments in the school with staff members available to answer questions about courses in their respective disciplines. This is a wonderful opportunity for students to explore elective courses at Bur Oak and to begin/extend their post-secondary planning!

### Parent Evening - Course Selection

On Tuesday February 13th from 5:30-6:30pm there will be parent presentations to help guide your child through the course selection process for next school year. All parents are welcome to attend. Please arrive at the school on time so you don't miss out on important information. We will direct you to the correct locations upon your arrival.

## Supporting Our Mental Health & Well-Being

### Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter (see attached)

#### [Senior Exercise Program - Newmarket Welcome Centre](#)

- o Priority given to those 65 years and older

#### [Peer Support Group for Parents and Caregivers](#)

- o This group is a support for parents and caregivers raising children and youth with mental health challenges
- o 3rd Monday of each month
- o Aurora Town Hall 6:30- 8pm
- o This group takes a break in December and will return January 15, 2024
- o York Hills Winter Group and Webinar Series.

**Groups** <https://www.yorkhills.ca/services/group-services/>

**Webinars** <https://www.yorkhills.ca/services/workshopsandwebinars/>

#### [Food Banks and Community Food Programs- York Region](#)

- o Provide free or low-cost food to individuals and families in need on an on-going, seasonal, and emergency basis.

For those coping with grief, the holidays may be particularly painful and overwhelming. Find coping strategies and free downloadable resources to help at [cmhabereavement.ca](http://cmhabereavement.ca).



Please review our [Student Handbook](#) to answer any questions you may have.

### 3 R's at Bur Oak Secondary School

At Bur Oak S.S., we have our **3 R's - Respect, Responsibility, Relationships** (see below) to maintain the positive, welcoming, respectful and inclusive learning environment at our school!



## 3Rs – Respect, Responsibility, Relationships

As Bulldogs, we:

- Are respectful, take responsibility and leave things better than we found it, and build positive and healthy relationships.
- Stand quietly during the playing of the National Anthem. If we arrive late to school, we stand quietly during the National Anthem and walk quietly to period 1 class during the morning announcements.
- Eat lunch in the cafeteria or in the first floor atrium during our lunch period 2, 3, or 4. We pick up after ourselves.
- Do not eat nor sit in the first floor hallways and we do not eat nor sit in the second floor hallways. We are not in the stairwells and we do not wander the hallways. We are respectful for classes in session.
- Do not congregate nor hang out in washrooms. We maintain a welcoming and safe school environment for students to use the washroom. We understand that nobody should feel intimidated in any parts of the school building.
- Use the first floor atrium tables for quiet study. We sit on chairs. We do not sit on top of the table and we do not lie down on tables or the floor.
- Wear earbuds for music in the hallways and atrium. We respect the environment of others by not using loud speakers.
- Dress appropriately for school.
- Ask our teacher for permission to leave the classroom to use the washroom or get a drink of water. We sign out to leave the classroom and sign in when we return to the classroom.



*Have a wonderful weekend!*