

THE BERCZY BANNER



William Berczy P.S.
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Vice-Principal

Ms. Dalia Osman
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Ms. Debbie Wong
Ms. Karen Cizmar

Lead Caretaker

Mr. Sebastian Dignoti

Trustee

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Mr. Peter Tse
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School Council Co-Chairs

Lisa Ren and Blair Anderson
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School Website

williamberczy.ps.yrdsb.ca/



A Message from Administration

Welcome 2017! The New Year has included exciting new learning for our William Berczy PS staff – and therefore for our students as well!

Teachers are working at all grade levels to provide opportunities for students to learn in new and exciting ways – to improve critical thinking skills, problem solving skills, communication skills, and be ‘future-ready’. Please do ask your child(ren) what they are learning at school, how they know they will be successful, what feedback they have received through the practice work in class (assessment FOR learning), and what their next steps will be to improve.

As a reminder, all schools in the YRDSB have a focus on 3 M’s - **Mathematics, Mental Health and Modern Learning**. We will continue to share highlights of student achievement in relation to our board and school priorities on our school Twitter feed and in our school newsletters. Our recent School Council meeting was a time to learn more about **MODERN LEARNING** – thanks to all those that came out to learn together. Coming soon – a more formal opportunity to learn about the **COMPREHENSIVE MATH PROGRAM** taught across the province of Ontario.

This month’s newsletter highlights resources on **STRESS**. Daily homework and assignments, grade 3 gifted screening, projects, report cards, co-curricular lessons, choosing a high school, moving, dealing with loss, making new friends, trying out for a school team, talent show or club – can all be sources of stress for our students.

Stress is like a violin string...just like a guitar or violin string needs to have the right amount of stress or tension to make music, we all need some stress in our lives to get us moving and motivate us to be our best. But if the string is stretched too tightly, it will break. Human beings operate similarly to the guitar string: **we need just the right amount of stress to perform well and feel good, but too much stress can make us snap!** Please do check out the resources in this Berczy Banner on **STRESS** to learn more. Let’s take care of our **MENTAL HEALTH!**

*Partners in Education,
Ms. Lott & Ms. Osman*

As many of you already know, this is my final edition of the Berczy Banner newsletter – as I am moving on to another school effective February 6th, 2017. Below is the letter that I shared with our community through email (Wednesday, January 25, 2017)



Hi to all in our Berczy community –

I am writing this email to let our William Berczy Public School community know that I will be leaving our school as Principal - effective February 6th, 2017. It will be very emotional to leave such a wonderful and supportive school community. I am honoured to have worked at WBPS as a Vice-Principal (in partnership with Mr. LaTouche), and I was honoured to be asked to return to WBPS as Principal (working with Vice-Principal partners Ms. Patrick, Mr. Williams and now Ms. Osman).

As you know, WBPS has a strong reputation of high expectations for all students and staff. Our students have so many wonderful opportunities each year due to our dedicated and professional staff who learn together to provide exemplary programs in each classroom and as well, our staff work beyond the instructional day to provide a wide variety of enriched learning opportunities for all students. For me, WBPS has fondly become my home away from home. Our Berczy Bears' Den is truly a place where all students, all staff, and all parents/guardians are a part of an innovative learning culture. As bears in the Den – we learn, grow, and celebrate together!

Although I am excited to move on to a new school and I embrace the new challenges that will come with it, I will very much miss our Berczy Bears! I feel extremely fortunate to have a career in education and I will miss the students, our staff – and you, the parents. I have so many wonderful memories that I will forever cherish of my time at William Berczy due to the relationships with many of you.

WBPS parents and guardians - thank you for choosing to move into our school community to provide the amazing opportunity for your children to learn with us. I thank you for trusting us with helping to guide your children – academically, artistically, athletically and socially/emotionally. It is because of you and your children that Berczy has such a strong reputation! Working with you as partners in education, has been a gift that I will treasure always.

- Last night at the YRDSB it was approved that I will be transitioning as Principal of Sir John A MacDonald PS.
- Also announced - **Ms. Lindsey Rhamey** will be joining Berczy as your new Principal. Please join me in welcoming Ms. Rhamey as your new incoming Principal who will continue on the great work! Below is a short bio from Ms. Rhamey...
 - *Since September of 2016, I have been the Vice Principal at both Little Rouge Public School and Ellen Fairclough Public School in Markham. I have been with York Region District School Board for the past 28 years, both as a teacher and administrator. In addition to my teaching qualifications, I have specialized in Special Education and Guidance. I am the proud mother of two daughters and three cats. I love to travel, read, watch movies and go to spinning classes. I am excited to be coming to William Berczy Public School and I look forward to meeting the students, staff and parents.*

(Both moves are effective February 6th, 2017).



Message from our Trustee, Mr. Billy Pang

We are now halfway through the school year. This is a good time to reflect on all that your child has learned and to look at setting goals for the rest of the school year.

Our Board believes that student well-being and achievement go hand-in-hand.

One of our goals set out in the [Board of Trustees' Multi-Year Plan](#) is to “continuously increase student achievement and well-being through a culture of caring and learning.”

The Ministry of Education has recently identified [four priorities for well-being](#): positive mental health, safe and accepting schools, healthy schools, and equity and inclusive education. As a Board of Trustees, we will continue to further work in all of these areas to support student well-being in line with these priorities.

There are many resources on the Board website to help support student well-being, including tips for [talking about mental health](#), [managing stress](#), [packing healthy lunches](#) and [addressing incidents of bullying](#).

Creating a healthy, safe and welcoming learning environment is key to helping our students reach their full potential. All of us have an important role to play in creating an environment that enables our students to thrive.

I wish you all the best for a healthy, happy and successful 2017.

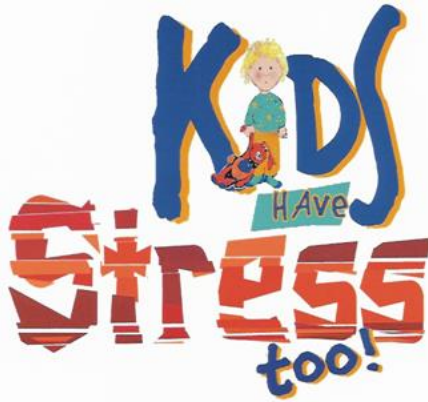
York Region District School Board School Climate Survey for Students

Students in Grades 5 to 12 at the York Region District School Board will be invited to participate in a survey between March 20 and April 28, 2017. The survey is voluntary, anonymous and confidential, and will take place at school.

The YRDSB survey fulfills the Ontario Ministry of Education’s requirement for schools to conduct student surveys and is aligned with the YRDSB’s Board Improvement Plan for Student Achievement and Well-Being. Survey questions will address topics related to Math, Modern Learning, Mental Health and Well-Being, Equity and School Safety.

This survey provides an opportunity to hear directly from students and the results will be used to identify student needs and plan strategies to support student achievement and well-being. If you have questions, please contact the school office.

If you do not wish your child(ren) to participate in the survey, please contact the school by March 10, 2017.



Stress is a normal, everyday occurrence. We tend to think of stress as a bad thing, but a certain amount of it actually helps us feel alert, energized and interested in life. However, too much stress, particularly when we don't have any control over it, can make people unhappy and can interfere with their ability to respond to everyday tasks and challenges.

Taking control of stress

Simple stress relievers include thinking more optimistically, talking to a trusted adult, taking a breather or doing something active, like running or playing basketball.

How to recognize stress in your children

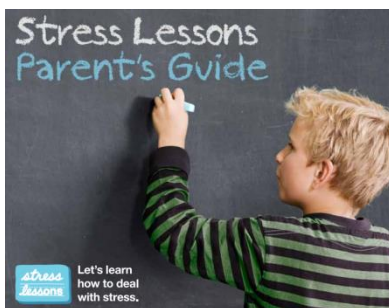
It's not always easy to recognize when kids are stressed out, short-term behavioural changes such as mood swings, acting out, changes in sleep patterns can all be indications. Some kids experience physical effects, including stomachaches and headaches. Others have trouble concentrating or completing schoolwork. Still others become withdrawn or spend a lot of time alone.



Stress Lessons – for kids and parents

Learning to manage stress can be fun for both you and your child. **Please check out the FREE “Stress Lessons”** at <http://bit.ly/1SecRMa>

(Source: *Stress Lessons – Parent's Guide - The Psychology Foundation of Canada*).



Be attentive and seek professional help if:

- Stress is interfering in your child's life, stopping them from doing the things that are important
- Your child is constantly seeking abnormal amounts of reassurance
- Your child is not coping well with daily stressors
- As a parent, you would like to discuss parenting strategies and ways of increasing your child's resilience with a professional

...and as always, as partners in education for our children, please do let our Berczy staff know of any concerns - so we can strategize together – as we care and are committed to the well-being of all!



American Mathematics Competitions - Congratulations to the twenty Gr. 7 and 8 students who participated in the American Mathematics Competitions in November. The Berczy team was awarded the Certificate of Merit. Detailed results are as follows:



- Thomas G (Gold | Certificate of Distinction | School Winner | Global top 1%)
- Jackie H (Silver | Honor Roll Certificate | Global top 5%)
- Arthur B & Andy W (Bronze | Honor Roll Certificate | Global top 5%)

The rest of the team members were Alexander C., Sophie Y., Ricky L., Ivan Y., Wilson Z., Moses X., Nadia D., Catherine Q., Neel N., Tinney M., Riaz A., Selina Q., Jonathan K., Riyad A., Louie Z., and Bob Y.

These twenty students formed Berczy's AMC8 Club this year and met twice a week at recess to practice problem solving. Congratulations once again to all. (Thanks Mr. Yuen)

Next School Council Meeting

Wednesday, March 1st, 2017

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Berczy Learning Commons (2nd floor)

Hope to see you there!

Please follow us on TWITTER [@WilliamBerczyPS](https://twitter.com/WilliamBerczyPS)



Our school TWITTER account is a place where we celebrate teaching and learning and highlight important school news!

As well, please do bookmark our school website - <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/williamberczy.ps/> ~ where you can follow school and board news – and as well you can see our Twitter feed on the bottom left of our school home page (for those without Twitter accounts...yet).

Did you know that WBPS will be celebrating our 50th year next school year?! Please help spread the word and use the hashtag #BERCZY50 in your tweets.

FORMER BERCZY STUDENT & OLYMPIC ATHLETE Sarah Wells came to speak with our students!

What a treat it was to have **Sarah Wells** back in the Den! Sarah Wells is a Berczy alumni student – who was here back about 13 years ago. Since leaving Berczy – she went on to UHS – and then University of Toronto – and **represented CANADA at the London Olympic Games in her event of 400 M Hurdles.**



Sarah spoke to our grades 4-8 students to share her messages of perseverance, growth mindset – and most importantly to **BELIEVE in yourself!** Students were very attentive as Sarah was sharing her journey – and our students were very excited to receive autographs and pictures with Sarah at the end!

You can learn more about the BELIEVE INITIATIVE here - <https://www.believeinitiative.com/>

Sarah asked us -

- ✓ Are you pushing yourself?
- ✓ Are you learning from your mistakes?
- ✓ Are you making the decision to succeed?
- ✓ DO YOU BELIEVE IN YOURSELF?

(Pictured below ~ Sarah showing her love of the Berczy Bears' Den – and her BELIEVE Olympic ring tattoo)



The French Corner: Why learn French? - This is a question very commonly asked by students and sometimes parents alike. As a French teacher of several years, I would argue that learning French differs from nearly any other subject area in the elementary school system. Like many subjects, there is a brief acquisition of the language's concepts in a limited amount of time, but unlike many subjects, those concepts need to be regularly practiced and used for French to be a properly communicable language. That doesn't mean to say that learning French is "all or nothing", but much like in our maternal languages, we are always learning, practicing, and fine tuning.

Learning French can be a daunting task for many young students especially because it is a communication tool. The inability to communicate coherently can cause frustration and for some, humiliation. Perhaps this is why many of my students would prefer that I speak to them in French, and allow them to respond in English. But the benefits of taking the risk to learn French far outweigh those potential moments of embarrassment.

Parents of my students like to hear when I tell them that learning French (which may not be their child's second, but third or fourth language) has cognitive benefits and that children who speak multiple languages have a stronger executive function (this is the system of which the brain helps with problem solving and focus). It is suggested that learning FSL develops a range of cognitive and metacognitive abilities, from improved memory to greater facility in abstract thinking, and improved literacy skills. As students progress in their learning, they generally become more flexible and creative thinkers.

In Canada, being bilingual offers students many opportunities when they are entering the work force. Many employers prefer to hire people who are bilingual and who will be able to communicate with a larger number of clients, and they will also have a greater opportunity to be asked to travel for their work. Just having French on that resume can be highly appealing for any employer and gives the job applicant an added edge over the competition.

But, for myself French has always been a communication tool and a bridge to other cultures because languages have that magical ability to connect us. In our FSL programs, we focus on intercultural understanding by studying the French communities in Canada and around the world. In doing so, the students have a deepening appreciation for other cultures, customs, and languages, which in our very multicultural society, encourages them to accept diversity.

We've all been there before; hearing something totally foreign, trying to awkwardly pronounce words, not knowing if our sentences are strung together correctly... But what is important is that we are all in this together, encouraging one another as lifelong learners. And I hope you, as parents, continue encouraging your children to become lifelong French learners too.

Madame S. Terzian

For more information on the benefits of learning French and French in Ontario schools, please feel free download your own copy of the Ministry of Education's publication titled "A Framework for French as a Second Language in Ontario Schools"
<http://edu.gov.on.ca/eng/amenagement/frameworkFLS.pdf>