



AMHS Parent Bulletin

Week of June 15, 2020

Message from Admin

This coming week will see us entering that time in Semester Two when students will begin consolidating their learning from the semester. This could look like a number of things, depending on both the nature of the course, as well as their progress up to this point. Students may be using this time to work on course culminating tasks, to catch-up in places they may have fallen behind, and/or to self-assess and reflect on their progress and continue connecting with teachers for feedback and support, to meet learning goals.

It is hard to believe, but the summer break is a mere two weeks away – and while perhaps the anticipation of this might feel different this year given our extraordinary circumstance, this break will in many respects be welcomed by students and families like never before! What our students have been able to accomplish, as they have continued their remote online learning from home for this prolonged period, is nothing short of remarkable. This year's summer break will provide a well-deserved respite from what has been a challenging and uncertain time for all. But for right now, the opportunity to connect with teachers in the "home-stretch" of the semester is a valuable one.

We encourage students to take some time in the week ahead to reflect on the semester's learning, resolve any course work that can contribute to increased achievement, and reach out to teachers for support and to ask any questions they might still have. Their teachers care, and want to see students meet their personal academic goals while completing each of their courses successfully.



Student Retrieval of Personal Items / Return of School Items

This past week, AMHS families received communications outlining the process for student retrieval of their personal items, which have remained in lockers since before the school closure took effect. This opportunity will also allow for the return of school items, such as course textbooks, library materials, musical instruments, etc. which need to be returned to the school. This process will take place **ONLY** on **Monday, June 15, Tuesday, June 16 and Wednesday, June 17, 2020**. Students can request a 15-minute time slot on one of these days, by emailing the school general mailbox at: alexander.mackenzie.hs@yrdsb.ca.

Please be aware that students are expected to **enter alone**, to limit the number of occupants in the school in any given time slot. They should bring their own bags, and clear out their personal items from their lockers as quickly as possible. Items that are being returned to the school should be dropped off in the designated locations, and then students are to exit the school through the designated exit, and leave school property immediately.

All graduating students, and students who are **not planning not return to AMHS or to a YRDSB school** in September, must return all borrowed items, including loaner Chromebooks, to the school during this scheduled opportunity. Students **who are returning to a YRDSB school in the fall** should keep their laptop for use over the summer. We thank you for your cooperation in advance.

Greetings and Message from Our Trustee – June 2020

Dear families,

I hope that you and your loved ones are keeping well and are healthy. The past few months have been full of change and uncertainty as we respond to the global pandemic and try to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a Board of Trustees, we know that our families have experienced this pandemic and the school closures in different ways, and we want you to know that our thoughts have been with you all.

Our school board moved quickly to introduce our [Learning and Caring Plan](#) through an intentionally phased approach. Our plan focused on both supporting student well-being and providing continuation of learning for more than 127,000 students. A plan was developed that respected each family's unique situations and focused on maintaining a caring, safe and inclusive learning environment. To support this, over 20,000 pieces of technology were distributed to ensure that all of our students could access the learning opportunities available to them, and resources and plans were put in place to support all of our learners, including students with special education needs and English language learners.

More information about the Learning and Caring plan as well as tips, resources and supports for students and families to support well-being and online learning can be found at www.yrdsb.ca/covid19.

We are all part of a larger community and I am inspired to see the many different ways schools, families and students maintained their connections with one another. It was also moving to see the many inspiring ways our school board, students, staff and families acknowledged our frontline workers and made contributions to the fight against COVID-19. As a school board, for example, we [donated over 145,000 pieces of personal protective equipment](#), including gloves, masks and more.

Each and every one of us has made a difference - in staying home as much as possible and following [public health guidelines](#). I know that this has meant making sacrifices.

To our graduating class of 2020, I know this is not the graduating year you had hoped for. I appreciate that the school closures will not affect your ability to graduate, however this unique situation and the need to postpone graduations has been disappointing. I remain tremendously proud of all of our graduates and look forward to celebrating this important milestone with you as soon as we are able to reschedule the graduation ceremonies.

In addition, I know that you have missed out on field trips, awards events, athletic banquets, spirit days, assemblies, our annual [Celebrating Student Success awards](#) and the many other ways we extend learning, connect as a community and celebrate the achievements of our students.

We have also been unable to gather together as we normally would in our schools and communities to celebrate or recognize important dates, including Sikh Heritage Month, Pesach, Good Friday, Easter (Western), Vaisakhi, Holy Friday, Orthodox Easter (Eastern), Ridvan, Jewish Heritage Month, Asian/South Asian Heritage Month, Ramadan, Pride, National Indigenous History Month, Italian Heritage Month and Portuguese Heritage Month. As a Board, these dates of significance are important for us to acknowledge and we will continue to celebrate and value the wealth of diversity in our community.

As the school year comes to a close, I want to wish you and your families a safe, healthy and happy summer. I look forward to a time when we can welcome your children back into our schools again. We know that families have questions about what the return to school will look like. We will continue to share information with you as it becomes available. In the meantime, we encourage you to continue following public health guidelines and to stay connected.

A [message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees](#) is also available on the Board website at www.yrdsb.ca.

Corrie McBain
Trustee, Richmond Hill, Wards 1, 2 and 4

Message from the Director and Board Chair

Please use the link below to access our Director's and Board Chair's message to our YRDSB schools community, regarding our Board's commitment to anti-Black Racism:

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/Repository/NewsEvents/Pages/BoardNews/Message-From-The-Director.aspx>

Message from the Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education has asked all school boards to share information about Ontario's new COVID-19 testing plan, including the availability of free testing for any Ontarian who would like it. Tests are free and do not require an OHIP card. Referrals are no longer required to visit an assessment centre and no Ontarian will be declined a test.

To learn more about this plan, including when you should get tested and the process, please visit our website to see a [message from the Ministry of Education regarding COVID-19 testing](#).

International Pride Month

June is Pride Month around the globe. This month was chosen to commemorate the Stonewall Riots which took place in New York City at the end of June 1969. In YRDSB, we committed to recognizing and celebrating Pride Month by way of a number of initiatives, including the opportunity for schools to fly the Pride Flag at their school sites below the Canadian Flag. The Pride Flag is internationally recognized as a symbol of pride, hope and diversity. Gilbert Baker, a San Francisco artist, designed the Pride Flag in 1978 as a response to the need for a symbol to support the LGBT rights movement. Flying the Pride Flag affirms our Board's commitment to eliminating harmful biases and prejudice that lead to discrimination and exclusion, it signals our commitment to upholding the principles outlined in the Ontario Human Rights Code and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms which are reflective of Canadian values, and it aligns with the YRDSB Director's Annual Plan, identifying Equity and Inclusivity as a priority area in our Board.

Supporting Online Learning in YRDSB

While schools will remain closed for the rest of the school year, we will continue to support your child's learning and well-being. We know that learning at home looks different for each family. We have developed a number of resources and tips to help students and families, including:

- [How to log in and use online learning platforms](#), including Google, Edsby and D2L. Short videos are also available.
- [Tips for families to support online learning](#).
- [Student Tech Help form](#) for support with student technology provided by the Board and accessing online learning platforms.
- [Mental health](#) and [community resources](#) for students and families.
- [Resources for students with special education needs](#).

To learn more about our [Learning and Caring Plan](#), access these resources and more, please visit www.yrdsb.ca/covid19. Google Translate is available on our Board's website.

Literacy Tip

Literacy Tip. Try some skimming and scanning together. Skimming is when you read through a piece of text quickly to find out what the main idea is; scanning is glancing through a piece of text to find a specific piece of information. You can do this with a newspaper – perhaps ask your child to find something out for you. Why not ask them to scan a newspaper for news about a favourite footballer, or to find out the weekend weather, or get them to skim read a recipe to tell you the basic steps?

Mental Health Tip of the Week

Our mental health tip of the week is regarding physical health. Consider doing something physical daily, anything to release the pent-up energy buzzing in your muscles and bones. This could involve a morning routine of stretches, an evening walk, or a bike ride.

Valedictorian – Student Voting

Graduating students can vote on the Valedictorian finalists, beginning on Monday, June 15. The voting process will close on Wednesday, June 17 at 4:00 p.m.

Grade 12 students can vote by accessing the form: bit.ly/AMHS_Valedictorian.

Dual Credit Courses

Registration for Dual Credits beginning in September 2020 is now open! This year, due to the current situation, our school board has been able to confirm that dual credits will be delivered on-line with a possible hybrid model (some in school/college components) later in the school year.

The target audience for a dual credit course is Senior YRDSB students who would like to continue their post-secondary studies at a college or in an apprenticeship. If you are interested in a dual credit course, connect with our Guidance Department. Priority will be given to Grade 12 students. Other applicants will be considered but placed on a waiting list. Course offerings, scheduling details and more information can be found in this flyer: bit.ly/DCflyer2020 Visit www.bit.ly/YRDSBdualcreditapp to apply for your Dual Credit course.

Summer School Programming

YRDSB will be holding two programs: Summer School E-Learning, and Secondary Summer School Remote Learning. Note that the traditional, in class face-to-face model for Secondary Summer School will move to a remote learning delivery model, as per Ministry direction. Teachers will be providing a synchronous model for all programs. The most up-to-date information regarding Secondary Summer School is linked here: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/ConEd/Pages/Secondary-School-Summer.aspx>

Considerations:

- Secondary Summer School Remote Learning course registrations continue to take place through My Pathway Planner, up until June 26. The start date for these courses is July 6.
- Summer School E-learning course registration remains open until June 25, through the Board's website, <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/e-learning/Pages/default.aspx>. The start date is July 2.
- Students may NOT register for the same course in both E-Learning and Summer School Remote Learning. If they have done so, they are advised to drop one immediately.
- All Summer School registration needs to be confirmed with Guidance.

Summer School this year will also provide a **Credit Upgrading Program for Grade 11 and 12, English Math or Science courses**. This upgrade can be obtained in two weeks. Students can sign up through My Pathway Planner, and contact Guidance for help if needed.

If you have any questions, do not hesitate to connect by email at ana.fisher@yrdsb.ca

AEBS Scholarships

The Alliance of Educators for Black Students (AEBS) is dedicated to the success of Black students African Canadian heritage in schools in the YRDSB. Unfortunately, AEBS had to cancel the 2020 Achievement Awards Ceremony due to COVID-19.

However, AEBS believes it is important for students to have access to funds to help pay for their post-secondary education. AEBS invites Black students from YRDSB schools who are graduating to apply for a scholarship online. The deadline to apply is Monday, June 15, 2020. To access, please use this link: <https://sites.google.com/gapps.yrdsb.ca/aebsscholarships/home>

Community Events and Upcoming Opportunities

Citizenship and Adult ESL Classes

For updated information regarding Citizenship Classes during the school closure period, please go to:

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/ConEd/Pages/Specialized-Programs-Citizenship.aspx?from=DigestNotification&e=brOKtaMmOU-L4d8mM1Xmeg&at=9>

Event for Parents – Virtual Meeting Opportunity (see flyer below)



Parents for Children's
Mental Health

SUPPORT. EDUCATE. EMPOWER.

Monday, June 15th 2020

6:30 pm - 8 pm

PARENTS' Support Group-all are welcome!

VIRTUAL MEETING

**Discussion Topic: Reducing conflict with our children and youth
in COVID-19 times.**

**Does your child's anxiety, ADHD, mood disorders, learning disability, or
behaviour challenges make parenting difficult? Join us...**

Please join my meeting early if you are not familiar with this app. Meeting opened at 6:15 pm. Access from your
computer, tablet or smartphone.

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/296949565>

You can also dial in using your phone. NOTE we only can offer a US number so long distance charges apply.

United States: [+1 \(646\) 749-3112](tel:+16467493112)

Access Code: 296-949-565

New to GoToMeeting? Get the app now and be ready when your first meeting starts:

<https://global.gotomeeting.com/install/296949565>

Benefits of PCMH Support Group:

- meet other parents with children who have similar challenges
 - find encouragement and emotional support
- learn strategies to help your child or youth at home/school
 - learn how to access resources in the community

Tips for Families to Support Online Learning



Teachers strive to work in partnership with home to support student learning and well-being in culturally responsive ways. Parents and families know their children best; as we transition to this new online learning context, please find some considerations below for supporting your child(ren) from home.

Establish and Maintain Routines

Help your child(ren) set regular hours for their school work using a calendar or checklist of required tasks per day. Expectations for daily tasks are important but do not have to be rigid and need to work for your family context. Customize your child(ren)'s schedule to fit their needs, as well as those of your family. Routines such as bedtime, nutrition, hygiene and physical activity are important. Establish these parameters from the beginning to build habits of success. At the end of the week, review which routines worked well and which may need to be adjusted moving forward.

Monitor Communications from your Child's Teacher(s)

Consider logging into online classrooms regularly to see announcements and lessons/activities posted by your child(ren)'s teacher and continue to communicate with the teacher as needed. Students are to do their best to complete work on time and meet deadlines and can connect with their teacher during the teacher's scheduled office hours when they need support.

Encourage Physical Activity and/or Exercise

Research shows that increased physical activity has a positive effect on cognitive functioning, health, well-being and learning. Remind your child(ren) to move and exercise. Take breaks from the learning when needed and get outside if possible. Consider an online physical challenge and/or exercise class.

Start/End Each Day With a Learning Check-In

Regular check-ins with your child(ren) will help them to process instructions, organize their work and proceed with the learning for the day. Engaging with your child(ren)'s learning can help support learning skills and work habits needed for successful online learning.

Find a Physical Space for Learning

We encourage families to help their child(ren) find a space(s) to work that supports sustained concentration, reading/listening/viewing and where they can check-in with them (consider using headphones where possible/appropriate). It is also important to remember that many children benefit from a 'flexible learning space,' meaning one where they can rearrange things or move to a different space depending on the type of work they are doing (e.g., move to a couch or beanbag chair for reading).

Remain Mindful of How your Child is Feeling

Online learning is new for everyone, so it's important to monitor and support your child(ren)'s well-being in this new context. Children may need help managing the worry, anxiety and range of emotions they may experience. Access [mental health and community support resources](#) as needed.

Support Digital Citizenship

Keep your child(ren) connecting online socially but be aware of their online interactions and the total amount of time they spend online. Monitor and set parameters for your child(ren)'s use of social media and the platforms they use. Remind your child(ren) that the rules of the classroom apply online too. They must be respectful and appropriate in their online communications. Online interactions should continue to align with the board's Digital Citizenship policy. Follow the [YRDSB Guidelines for Acceptable use of Technology](#).

YRDSB School Closure-Related Updates

May 27th – Learning and Caring At Home Survey

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/Repository/NewsEvents/Pages/BoardNews/Coronavirus.aspx>

FAQs for Families Regarding Student Learning, Mental Health Supports:

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/Repository/NewsEvents/Pages/BoardNews/Coronavirus-FAQ.aspx#CommunityandMentalHealthSupport>

York Region Public Health Updates: www.york.ca/covid19

School Council

Minutes

School Council minutes can be accessed through the AMHS school website by clicking on the link below:

[School Council Minutes](#)

School Contact Information

School Website Information

<http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/alexandermackenzie.hs/Pages/default.aspx>

Superintendent- Michael Cohen

Phone: (905) 884-4477

cec.central@yrdsb.ca

Trustee-Corrie McBain

(416) 219-7426

corrie.mcbain@yrdsb.ca

Alexander Mackenzie High School

Principal – Krista Pummell

Vice-Principals – Yula Nouragas (A-L), George Ellinas (M-Z)

Telephone: 905-884-0554

Special Education

Twitter: [@AlexMackSpecEd](#)

Arts Mackenzie

<http://bit.ly/ARTSMackenzie>

Arts & Culture:

Instagram: [#amhsartscouncil](#)

Visual Arts Department

Twitter: [@amhsvisa](#)

Instagram: [#amhs.studio](#)

Music Department

www.amhsmusic.ca

Moderns Department

Twitter: [@AlexModerns](#)

MAC Health, Physical Education & Athletics

For information about our programs, please follow us:

Twitter: [@Mustangsmove](#)

Instagram: [macpheathletics](#)

Alexander Mackenzie H.S. On Twitter

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*All Parent Bulletins are posted to the school website (*see web address, linked above).*

If you do not wish to receive this Newsletter, please notify Alexander Mackenzie High School by email.