



The Black River Bear Weekly



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Let's Talk About Belonging & Well-being...

Next Wednesday, January 29th is [Bell Let's Talk Day](#). The focus of the day is two-fold; reducing stigma and raising awareness in the area of mental health and wellness for all Canadians- young and old. One of the more positive changes that have occurred in our society over the past 10 years has been a greater understanding of mental health overall and a growing empathy for the realities that those who struggle with mental illness. It is estimated that 1 in 5 Canadians will experience some form of a mental illness in their life and all of us, families, friends and community members are impacted by the mental health challenges of those we care about. To put that number into our school context; over 50 of our 240 students are; or may be; coping with the challenges of a mental illness to varying degrees- This is why; as a school and a board, we have identified the following [key actions](#):

- Build positive relationships with staff and students to promote feelings of mattering and belonging.
- Build our understanding of the ways we can support mental health and well-being of our students and staff.
- Look for gaps in our programs related to mental health and well-being so we can better support our students and staff in this area.

As a school and a district we are seeking input from our students and families, accessing the expertise of our community partners and rethinking how we can design our learning environments to ensure that those among us who are struggling with mental illness feel that they are safe, they belong and are able to develop the resilience and agency to learn and grow.

Behaviour is communication and often, what we think is 'bad behaviour' is the manifestation of the anxieties that come with mental illness. This mindset requires a shift in thinking for many of us and it challenges us to respond with both consequences and care- something we can all learn (and talk) about more.

Brian Harrison & Christine Smith

The Week Ahead...

Mon. Jan. 27th	Day 5	Pita Lunch
Tues. Jan. 28th	Day 1	Tour for Humanity...Gr. 5-8
Wed. Jan. 29th	Day 2	Bell Let's Talk Day
Thurs. Jan. 30th	Day 3	Pizza Lunch
Fri. Jan. 31st	PA Day	<i>No classes for students</i>

Quick Hits...

Monday Lunch & Booster Juice Orders...Families are reminded that Lunch Box and Booster Juice orders will continue throughout the school year. Orders alternate between Mr. Sub and Pita Pit take place on Mondays; Booster Juice orders take place every other Wednesday. Orders need to be placed by noon Sunday for the following day. Please go to www.lunchboxorders.com. Thank you for your support in Black River Public School's fundraising initiatives. *Orders impacted by any school closures or inclement weather days will be rescheduled.*

Our Bears Don't Hibernate in Winter...Parents are reminded to ensure their children are dressed for the winter weather every day as we do make sure we get our students outside every day. In cases where cold temperatures are extreme we will modify or shorten outdoor time. Parents of students who are eligible for bus transportation are reminded to tune into local media outlets or check online at [School Bus City](#) to confirm bus service on inclement weather days.

Council Corner...

Council Updates and information...Our next school council meeting is scheduled for **Monday, February 3rd @ 5:30** in the staff room, parents and new members are always welcome and child minding is provided. Please follow our [Black River School Council Facebook Page](#) for current information on what we are planning and what is happening in the school or; contact us at blackriverschoolcouncil@gmail.com if you have any questions or would like to get involved!

A Message from Our Trustee...

As we enter another month of winter, this is a good time to be thinking about our health, well-being and the importance of self-care. We know that, like all of us, our students can focus better when they feel better. Our schools play an important role in health and mental health promotion and education, and fostering well-being and mental health is one of our [priorities as a school board](#).

There is a lot of work taking place in our schools and board to create [healthy schools](#) and promote [mental health](#) and well-being, including:

- Providing training and resources for educators on strategies to support mentally healthy classrooms for all students, including holding a mental health conference.
- Hiring identity specific mental health workers and developing partnerships with [community partners](#) to serve the diverse needs of our students.
- Developing a [Student Suicide Intervention Protocol](#) to help keep students safe in the event of suicidal thoughts or actions.
- Educating students about the risks of [substance use and misuse](#), including [vaping](#) and [cannabis](#).
- Providing strategies and supports for students in [preparing for exams](#) and [managing stress](#).

This commitment is also reflected in Board policy like the [Healthy Schools and Workplaces](#) policy and procedures. Setting policy, which governs the operation of the Board, is one of the [roles of trustees](#), and we greatly value the input provided by students, staff members, family and community members. I encourage you to look at the [policies under review](#) and share your feedback.

We have a lot to look forward to in 2020. At the Board meeting in December, trustees unanimously approved the addition of [new permanent Indigenous Trustee and Indigenous Student Trustee positions](#). We are committed to Indigenous Education in our Board and it is important that these voices are represented at the table. We hope to fill the positions as soon as possible and will share more information as it becomes available.

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

Cynthia Cordova

Trustee, Georgina

January @ Black River Public School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Dec. 29	Dec. 30 Winter Break	Dec. 31 New Year's Eve Winter Break	1 New Year's Day Winter Break	2 Winter Break	3 Winter Break	4
5 Lunch Orders due	6 Day 1 Epiphany (Christian) Classes Resume School Council @ 5:30	7 Day 2 Christmas (Eastern)	8 Day 3 Booster Juice	9 Day 4 Pizza Lunch	10 Day 5	11
12 Lunch Orders due	13 Day 1 Pita Lunch	14 Day 2 Planetarium Presentations (K-Gr.7)	15 Day 3	16 Day 4 Pizza Lunch	17 PA Day Kindergarten Registration @ 9:00	18 Epiphany (Eastern)
19 Lunch Orders due	20 Day 5 Mr. Sub Lunch	21 Day 1	22 Day 2 Booster Juice	23 Day 3 Pizza Lunch	24 Day 4	25 Lunar New Year
26 Lunch Orders due	27 Day 5 Pita Lunch	28 Day 1 Tour for Humanity (Gr.5/6 - Gr. 8)	29 Day 2	30 Day 2 Pizza Lunch	31 PA Day	Feb. 1

Please remember to check our school [website](#) calendar for current updates and details on school events.