



The Black River Bear Weekly



Vol. 4.1 November 30th- December 4th, 2020

Web <http://blackriver.ps.yrdsb.ca/>

Twitter [@blackriverps](https://twitter.com/blackriverps)

Telephone 905.722.5889

Principal: brian.harrison@yrdsb.ca

Superintendent: drew.mcNaughton@yrdsb.ca ph. 905-895-5155

Trustee: cynthia.cordova@yrdsb.ca ph. 905-722-5889

Endings & Beginnings...

"Everybody has a neighbour, everybody has a friend. Everybody has a reason to begin again." ~Bruce Springsteen~

I am writing to announce that I will be retiring at the end of December and, as a result, my term as principal of Black River PS will officially come to an end on Friday, December 31st, 2020. Though my decision to retire at this time may come as a surprise to the members of our school community; it is one that I have made with certainty, a feeling of peace and a sense of accomplishment. When it is time to go, it's time to go.

Black River is a special place; I knew this three years ago when I was given the opportunity to come here as principal; and I have been reminded of how special it is every day since. During my time here I have continued to marvel at the dedication of our staff, the honesty and support of our families and the energy and authenticity of our students. I am mindful of the many ways Black River has influenced me; working to meet the daily challenges of our school has helped me grow, both as an educator and a person. Serving as the principal of our school has engaged my imagination and helped me to become a kinder and more patient version of myself. For this I am grateful to our students, our families and, most of all, the skilled and dedicated members of our staff.

I am proud of the work we have done here and satisfied that I am leaving Black River in good shape. We are a school with a clear vision, a strong focus and the people and resources required to sustain what we have built during the past three years. I am departing with a feeling of pride, satisfaction and the same passion and enthusiasm I had when I began here. It was always my plan to retire at some point during this school year and, as the year progressed it became clear to me that the Christmas break was the most appropriate time to leave. The name of your new principal will be shared in a few weeks as part of the board's regular administrator appointments and transfer process. I trust that, whomever it may be, our incoming principal will arrive eager to work in partnership with our staff, students and families to navigate the rest of this school year and begin the planning process for the school years to come.

In closing, I want to express my thanks to all of our BRPS parents, grandparents, aunties and uncles. Over the past three years I have appreciated our partnership and collaboration. You have willingly shared your opinions (even when we disagreed) and trusted me with the care and well-being of your children. It has been an honour to work with you and I will miss you- not all the time- but certainly enough to make me smile and truly appreciate my retirement years.

Brian Harrison

The Week Ahead...

Monday, November 30th Day 3	Tuesday, December 1st Day 4	Wednesday, December 2nd Day 5	Thursday, December 3rd Day 1	Friday, December 4th Day 2
		Fire Drill @ 9:30 am	Spirit Day Holiday Sweater Day	

Quick Hits...

Inclement Weather School Closures...Our board tries to keep schools open as much as possible, and in previous years, schools have remained open even when school transportation is cancelled. This year, however, given the importance of adhering to our [health and safety guidelines](#), we have made the decision to **close schools to students when an inclement weather day is declared and school transportation is cancelled. Please do not send your child to school when an inclement weather day is declared.** We are unable to guarantee appropriate coverage for students on inclement weather days when school transportation is closed and classes cannot be combined.

Please take the time to make plans in the event of an inclement weather day school closure. Please note that before and after care programs will not be operating on inclement weather days. For on-site, full-day child care, please confirm with your childcare operator. There are rare occasions when school transportation is cancelled due to extreme cold weather and not road conditions, and schools will remain open for students.

Student learning will continue:

- Students attending elementary school in person will be provided with learning activities for the day through their Google classroom and teachers will be available online to support students.
- Students attending secondary school in person will shift to virtual learning for all of their classes for the day.
- Elementary and secondary virtual schools will operate as normal.

Communication to families

Decisions about school transportation and school closures will be made as early as possible and no later than 6:00 a.m. We will do our best to notify families in advance. Transportation cancellations or school closures will also continue to be communicated through:

- Student Transportation Services website: www.schoolbuscity.com
- Student Transportation Hotline: 1-877-330-3001
- [Board website](#) and school websites
- [@YRDSB](#) Twitter account
- Radio and TV media outlets

Families who have provided the school with their cell phone will also receive a text message, unless you have opted out of this service. Please contact your school if you have any questions.

School Council Updates...Parents are invited to join our **Black River School Council**. Council members work together to support student learning and wellness, host events and enhance our school program. The council meets via videoconference on the **first Monday of the month** (our next meeting is **Monday, Dec. 7th at 6:15**). Please follow our [Black River School Council Facebook Page](#) for more information on what we are planning and what is happening in the school.

Trustee Greetings...

I hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and well. 2020 has been a challenging year in so many ways, and the global pandemic has affected individuals and families in different ways. I want to reassure you that we continue to work closely with York Region Public Health and to prioritize the health and well-being of our students, staff members and families.

You can learn more about what schools are doing at www.yrdsb.ca/school-reopening

It continues to be important that we adhere to the health and safety measures in place to help reduce the spread of COVID-19. While we have seen cases in some of our schools, we continue to work with public health to respond quickly, identify cohorts that need to self-isolate as a precautionary measure and take all appropriate measures. I want to thank all of our students, families and staff members for their diligence in adhering to the public health recommendations and health and safety measures in place in our schools.

One of our priorities in our [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) is to foster well-being and mental health. As a result of the pandemic, many of us are facing changes and new challenges that can take a toll on our mental health. It is more important than ever that we check in on one another and practice self-care. There are [mental health resources for students and families](#) on our Board website that address the unique nature of our current situation. You can also find information about our [Mental Health and Addiction Strategy](#) and the [work we are doing in schools](#) to promote positive mental health and provide support for students.

While there are challenges, we also continue to have so many reasons to feel positive. Our students continue to impress us with their kindness, creativity, innovation, resilience, courage and perseverance. Visit us on [YouTube at YRDSBMedia](#) to see just some of these stories.

In the coming weeks and months, many of our students and families will be celebrating days of significance and holidays, and I wish you all the very best for the season. While we may be celebrating a little differently this year, I hope everyone has a safe and happy winter break and we look forward to welcoming students back into our in-person and virtual schools in January.

Trustee Cynthia Cordova

December @ Black River Public School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Nov. 29th Advent Begins	Nov. 30th Day 3	1 Day 4	2 Day 5	3 Day 1 Holiday Sweater Day	4 Day 2	5
6	7 Day 3 School Council @ 6:15	8 Day 4	9 Day 5	10 Day 1 Chanukah Begins	11 Day 2 Red & Green Day	12
13	14 Day 3	15 Day 4 Holiday Character Day	16 Day 5	17 Day 1 Spirit Day-Pajama Day	18 Day 2	19
20	21 Christmas Break	22 Christmas Break	23 Christmas Break	24 Christmas Eve	25 Christmas Day	26 Boxing Day Kwanza Begins
27	28 Christmas Break	29 Christmas Break	30 Christmas Break	31 New Year's Eve	Jan. 1st Happy New Year!	Jan. 2nd

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