



# The Black River Bear Weekly



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## Back to School in this Most Fascinating of Years...

At the end of what I have decided to call the longest March Break ever, I want to warmly welcome our students and families to the new school year! I hope that you and your loved ones enjoyed the summer days; you had the chance to safely reconnect with dear friends and family members and had the opportunity to enjoy the bits and pieces of the pre-Covid life that Phase 3 offered us.

A lot has happened in our world since that gloomy March day when we closed down the building (and shortly thereafter the country). The surreal shock of the shutdown and responses to the virus (including our rapid pivot to online learning), the global media focus on the heightened tensions and increased awareness of racism and the inequities in the impact of the COVID-19 virus on disadvantaged communities; these are some of the urgent and important issues that all communities (including ours) have grappled with during this most fascinating of years. Against the backdrop of all that stress and negativity, there were also many victories, both small and large, to acknowledge and celebrate. As a school community we rallied together to support our most vulnerable children and families with food and technology, our staff and our families did their best to support ongoing learning and we worked hard to maintain the important connections and relationships that are the foundation of our Black River Public School community.

With all these experiences, and the new habits we have all developed to stay safe in the Covid world, we now face a new challenge as a school community- the return to school for in class learning. As principal of our school and leader of our dedicated team of educators I want to express, with humility and a wee bit of anxiety, thanks for the trust you have placed in us. Over the next week or so we will have lots of information to share with you- we promise to share it piece by piece so we don't overwhelm. In advance of our return next week I want to share with you the three priorities I will dedicate my time and focus on this year:

- 1) *The health and safety of our staff and our students;*
- 2) *Maintaining the connections, the relationships and trust we have built together as a school community;*
- 3) *Supporting the physical and mental health needs of our staff, students and families.*

Please let your kids know we are here and we are ready to welcome them back as safely as we can. Let them know that, if we all follow the rules, wear our masks, keep a safe distance and wash our hands we can do this together. Welcome back to this most fascinating school years- stay safe and be well!

*Brian Harrison*

## The Week Ahead...

Mon. Sept. 7th Labour Day	Happy Labour Day!
Tues. Sept. 8th Day 1	No classes for students
Wed. Sept. 9th Day 2	No classes for students
Thurs. Sept. 10th Day 3	School for students in SK only and Gr.1-8 students in Group A
Fri. Sept. 11th Day 4	School for students in SK only and Gr.1-8 students in Group B

## Quick Hits...

**Student Drop off & Pick up...**we know that many parents have opted not to use the bus and will be driving their children to and from school this year. In order to ensure a safe and orderly drop off and pick up period we have cleared the western half of our parking lot (closest to the baseball diamond) of all vehicles and designated it as our **Safe Drop Off Zone**. We expect that vehicles will enter and exit in a safe and orderly manner respecting one another as well as the staff and children who will be in this area. Please note to help ensure safe entry and physical distancing we ask that students arrive at **9:00 am or later** and enter the building as soon as they arrive. We have adapted our safe arrival and attendance procedures so that students who may arrive after our 9:10 entry bell are not marked as late or absent. At the end of the day, staff will supervise our dismissal process to ensure students are physically distanced and safely make it to the vehicle that is picking them up. ***Please do not use the bus loop at the front of the school to drop off or pick up students at the beginning and end of the school day.***

**EDSBY..**All schools in the YRDSB now use a secure online parent communication and engagement platform called EDSBY. EDSBY is also used to manage student attendance- parents who have activated their account can even enter their child's absence using the EDSBY app (which means no more phone calls to report an absence). Parents who have activated their EDSBY accounts can log in on **Wednesday, Sept. 9th** to confirm their child's homeroom teacher and class placement.

## Trustee Greetings...

As we begin a rather different start to the school year, I want to take this opportunity to welcome all new and returning students and families. Whether you are returning to school in person or participating in remote, online learning, we look forward to welcoming you into safe, inclusive and engaging learning spaces.

Staff members have been working hard over the summer months with the Ministry of Education and public health experts to develop a [reopening plan](#) that prioritizes the health, safety and well-being of our students and ensures that important [health and safety measures](#) are in place.

Please know that whatever learning model you have chosen, we will continue to provide your children with high quality education, and to support their learning, achievement and well-being. Our school staff are prepared to help your child transition back into our learning environments, and we will continue to partner with families to support your child's success.

We know that families have many questions about what to expect as their children return to school. You can find information about what to expect at the start of the school year on the Board website, including frequently asked questions that you may find helpful at [www.yrdsb.ca/school-reopening](http://www.yrdsb.ca/school-reopening). As your school board trustee, it is my role to advocate for quality public education in York Region, and to ensure that our students remain at the centre of all of our decision making. The [Board of Trustees](#) makes [policy](#) and [budget](#) decisions, and communicates with the public, among other [responsibilities](#).

We are also responsible for setting direction for the school board, through our [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#). This plan sets out four priorities: Foster Well-Being and Mental Health, Build Collaborative Relationships, Champion Equity and Inclusivity, and Empower Ethical Leadership.

The relationship that we have with families is important, and I will continue to keep you informed of our work and priorities. You can also find the [message from the Chair of the Board](#) on the Board's website. You are welcome to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

I hope you have a great start to the school year and wish you a happy, healthy and successful year ahead.

*Trustee Cynthia Cordova*

# September @ Black River Public School

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	August 31	1 PA Day	2 PA Day	3 PA Day	4	5
6	7 Labour Day	8 Day 1 No classes for students	9 Day 2 No classes for students	10 Day 3 School for students in SK and Group A (Gr.1-8)	11 Day 4 School for students in SK and Group b (Gr.1-8)	12
13	14 Day 5 School for students in SK and Group A (JK- Gr.8)	15 Day 1 School for students in SK and Group B (JK-Gr.8)	16 Day 2 School for all students in SK and (Gr.1-8) and JK Group A	17 Day 3 School for all students in SK and (Gr.1-8) and JK Group B	18 Day 4 School for all students from JK to Gr.8	19
20	21 Day 5	22 Day 1	23 Day 2	24 Day 3	25 Day 4	26
27	28 Day 5	29 Day 1	30 Day 2	Oct. 1 Day 3	Oct. 2 Day 4	Oct. 3

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