



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: Dec. 12 - Dec. 23, 2022

Trait of the Month: Empathy

The mission of The Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School is to develop literate students who are innovative, well-rounded lifelong learners and critical thinkers. We aim to foster caring global citizens who maintain inclusive and respectful interactions with others.

The Dr. G.W. Williams SS

Administrative Team

Melissa Schmidt, Principal
George Tsigaridis, VP (A-Le)
Andrew Gazaneo, VP (Li-Z)

Contact Us

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Phone Extensions:

Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

Daily Schedule

Period 1 8:20-9:40

Period 2 9:45-11:00

Period 3 11:05-12:20

Period 4 12:25-1:40

Period 5 1:45-3:00

School Website: <http://drgwilliams.ss.yrdsb.ca/>
Email: dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca

Social Media: [@drgwilliams](#) (Instagram & Twitter)
Attendance: drgwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca

This week:

Dec. 12	JR Boys Basketball vs Sacred Heart CHS 4 pm (Home game)
Dec. 13	Ice Hockey Game vs Alexander Mackenzie HS at Aurora Family Leisure complex 3 pm Senior Boys Tier 2 Basketball vs Newmarket HS at our school 4 pm
Dec. 14	Parent/Caregiver Mental Health Series Supporting Students of the Chinese Heritage Community
Dec. 15	Music Winter Concert (evening) Cafeteria 7 pm Senior Girls Volleyball vs King City SS, Denison at Renaissance ESC 3:30 pm JR Boys Basketball vs Mulock SS at Mulock SS 4 pm Deadline to buy tickets for Williams Music Holiday Wish through Cash online (see details below). Deadline: Families and Schools Together
Dec. 16	Williams Music Holiday Wish - Wishes will be granted on Instagram Live after school. Open Mic, Room 129 start 3:15 pm

Upcoming

Dec. 19	Curling Team Game vs Bill Hogarth SS at York Curling Club 2:30 pm JR Boys Basketball vs St. Max CHS at our school 4 pm
Dec. 20	Ice Hockey Game vs Aurora HS at Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex 2:30 pm Senior Boys Tier 2 Basketball vs Huron Heights 4 pm (Home game) Senior Girls Volleyball vs Renaissance ESC, Huron Heights at Keswick HS 3:30 pm
Dec. 21	
Dec. 22	
Dec. 23	Last day of school before winter break. Back on Jan 9, 2023.

To support your family planning, the 2022-2023 YRDSB School Year Calendar is available on the [YRDSB website](#). Additionally, all tentative dates for our school events have been updated on our [Google calendar](#) on our [school website](#).

Message from the Principal

As a school we continue to have discussions and provide reminders to all students regarding appropriate usage of washroom spaces. The staff are regularly entering the washroom areas to move loitering students either onto class or to find available spaces at lunch within the school (Cafeteria, Library, Student Services, etc.). We know that when students are gathering in the washrooms it makes it uncomfortable for others to enter the washroom for the purposes it is intended. We also know that when students are gathered in the washrooms inappropriate and unsafe activities such as vaping, fighting, vandalism etc. take place.

Recently we have found a trend of groups of students (4-5 at a time) locking themselves into the larger accessible stall designed to accommodate wheelchairs and sitting on the floor in a group. Please know that as a staff we are committed to ensuring safety in all areas of the school and do enter the 'public' spaces within the washrooms regularly to monitor the behaviour of students and move students along. When we have found students clearly loitering after having been warned we have escorted them to the office and called parents. Last week we also posted 'No Loitering' signs in the washrooms. The next step in this progressive discipline is to begin issuing suspensions to students who continue to impact the moral tone of the school and have a disregard for the directions of staff in this regard. This is a step we are hesitant to take as we want our students in classes, however, we cannot allow a small group of students to have a negative impact on the rest of the student body through their choices and disregard for the needs of others and directions of the staff.

Vaping in schools, on school property or within 20 metres of school property is governed under the Smoke Free Ontario Act, and consequences could include suspension and possible fines up to \$5,000. Students who are caught vaping will have the vape confiscated to be picked up by a parent and they will receive a written warning and engage in some education. A second offence will result in the administration contacting the Tobacco Enforcement Officer and they will come to the school and issue a fine (and those under 16 would automatically receive a summons to attend court). For more details on what you can do to prevent student substance misuse, please visit the [YRDSB's Caring and Safe Schools](#) website and [Vaping and E-Cigarettes](#) subpage for resources to continue the conversation.

Over the past year we have purchased over 100 Chromebooks for use by students throughout the school. Through the pandemic, both students and staff have realized some of the many benefits that technology as a tool in the classroom can provide for collaboration, application of skills and task completion. Initially 100 Chromebooks seemed to be adequate to fulfil the need. That is no longer the case. Unfortunately, we are not in a position as a school to provide a Chromebook for every student that does not bring technology each day, however, there are a number of students in our building for whom this is the only technology they have access to and it is important for them to have it available. When we run out of Chromebooks in the morning many students will try to rely on their phones. Although this is ok for short tasks, it is not productive and leads to much distraction in the classroom. If you have a portable laptop or Chromebook that your child could bring to school we would encourage you to have them bring it. If through this holiday season you have the means and could purchase a Chromebook as a gift for your child (or for an upcoming birthday, etc.) they would make good use of it (you can find them for as little as \$300). We will continue to have the Chromebooks available each day for those that need them but we know that our inventory exceeds the demand and are hoping that as a school community we might be able to support those that are unable to access technology (or even forget it at home one day) by having our Chromebooks more easily accessible in the library. Thanks for your help to support learning in the classrooms for all students.

This semester the staff at Williams have been focusing our learning on Identity Affirming Classroom Spaces as well as Equitable Assessment Practices. Within each department teachers have been mapping their assessments based on overall curriculum expectations in their subject areas and looking at a variety of ways to collect assessment data from observations, conversations and products in the classroom. The following fundamental principles are the underpinning of our work in assessment:

- Equitable assessment is flexible; **not all students need to demonstrate learning in the same way**. How students learn should inform the ways we assess individual students.
- Students learn in different ways and have different strengths; we can honour this by allowing **voice and choice** in how they demonstrate their learning.

→ To best serve **each** student, we need to prioritize assessment **as** and **for** learning. Evaluation is **only** based on evidence of learning gathered connected to the overall curriculum/program expectations.

This is extremely important work as part of the overall equity strategy of the board and we are all continuing to learn and apply our learning in order to best support the achievement of each of our students as individuals. Just as a teacher would differentiate instruction to meet the needs of various learners in the classroom, Growing Success (2010) does not require all students to be evaluated in the same way. Students need to be evaluated based on standards connected to overall expectations. Students must be evaluated as compared to these standards, not as compared to other students. As teachers reflect on the work they have done in their classrooms this semester and the learning we have done through the pandemic on differentiated assessment opportunities you will begin to see varied approaches to assessments that align with these fundamental principles. Teachers are in the process of finalizing how students will demonstrate their learning of all the overall expectations for the final 30% of their grade. In the new year we will provide a schedule of what the culminating days will look like from January 26-February 2 and individual teachers will be providing information to students specific to their classes as they design final assessments that are aligned with the work that has been done throughout the semester. Please don't hesitate to reach out to your child's classroom teacher, a subject department head or the administration if you have any questions.

At this time we would like to thank Mr. Tsigaridis for all of his contributions to our school this semester. We have been grateful to have his experience, care and concern here supporting students and staff. Mr. Tsigaridis will be returning to a well deserved retirement after December 20th when our permanent Vice Principal, Ms. Mitchell returns to the school.

All the best for a joyous holiday season and time with family and friends over the break. We encourage all our students and staff to step away from the classrooms and the class work over the break so that they may come back refreshed in the new year.

Melissa Schmidt

Message From Our Trustee

I am happy to serve as your trustee on the 2022-2026 Board of Trustees.

As a trustee, my role includes being an advocate for quality public education in York Region, and I want to assure you that I am committed to that work. Every one of our students deserves to be learning in an environment where they feel safe, valued and supported in learning and achieving success.

Part of our role as trustees includes making [policy](#) and [budget](#) decisions, and setting our priorities as an organization through a [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#). Our board will work hard to keep students at the centre of our decision making, and to build collaborative relationships with the families and communities we serve. The education of our students, your children, is a partnership and the relationships we have with families is an essential one.

Communicating with families and members of the public is also an important part of our role, and I look forward to connecting with members of the school community in the coming weeks and months. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or concerns. I will be sharing information with you throughout the school year, and letting you know more about our work and priorities as a school board. You can also visit the board website at www.yrdsb.ca or follow on social media.

As we head into December, I also want to wish you a safe and enjoyable winter break. There are many significant dates in December for different faiths and cultures, and to all those celebrating, I wish you a happy and joyous celebration. I hope everyone has an opportunity to spend time with family and friends, relax and recharge, and we look forward to welcoming you back in January.

Melanie Wright
Trustee, Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville

Literacy Corner

Dr. G.W. Williams S. S. has applied to the **Learning & Engagement Accelerator Fund** for a grant that would allow us to start a living library. Our chances of getting this grant increase with the more community support it has. The Living Library project challenges stereotypes, stigma, prejudice and discrimination by presenting students with many different lived experiences existing in our local context. It promotes tolerance, celebrates differences, and encourages understanding of people with lived experiences from a variety of cultural, social, or lifestyle backgrounds. The project would enable us to bring in a wide variety of speakers to get diversity in speaker topics and backgrounds and their types of interactions with students. The link to the project proposal can be found [here](#). Your support in sharing and commenting on the project page would be greatly appreciated.

Williams School Yearbook

After two years of not being able to publish a full Yearbook, Williams Yearbook Team is in full swing preparing for a 2022-2023 full publication! Yearbooks are a special memento that students get to take away with them at the end of the school year as it highlights all events, sports, clubs, staff and of course students of that year. All grades are represented equally in the book and it is truly a representation of our school community. Purchase your beautiful hard copy today!

Will only be available for purchase on [School Cash online](#)!

Student Activity Fee Paid \$46 *Recommended
Student Activity Fee NOT Paid \$50

Notices

360°kids believes that every young person deserves a safe place to call home. Since our founding in 1989, 360°kids has continued to provide a full complement of programs and services aimed at assisting at-risk and homeless youth. For more information see [here](#).

York Region Alliance of African Canadian Communities Events and Programs

York Region Alliance of African Canadian Communities (York Region AACC) provides programs for Black Students Across York Region. Please see the [events web page](#) for details.

Parent/Caregiver Mental Health Series Supporting Students of the Chinese Heritage Community

共建美好家庭座談會 / 共建美好家庭座談會

Join us for an in-person community building and engagement event on Dec 14th, 2022 at Armadale Community Centre from 6:00pm-8:30pm for parents and guardians of students of Chinese Heritage. See [link](#) for more details.

Mental Health December Newsletter

December's [Mental Health Newsletter](#) for families and caregivers has a focus on the Student Mental Health and Addiction Strategy: Within Us, Between Us, and Around Us - a closer look at Between and Around.

Families and Schools Together

'[Families and Schools Together](#)' is a play and art therapy based program that allows families to come together. A program that will help reduce caregiver isolation by connecting with other families in the 2SLGBTQI+ community.

Wellness Committee

"Give a Gift, Take a Gift" As the holiday season is fast approaching the Wellness Committee would like to introduce their new initiative, "Give a Gift, Take a Gift". If your child would benefit from receiving a gift this holiday season either for themselves or so that they can give to a loved one, please encourage them to complete the following [form](#). Furthermore, if you are able to donate a gift or funds to support our students in need, please fill out the same [form](#). We are accepting any new gifts, will ask you to purchase a specific gift, or are accepting cash donations for us to buy the gifts requested. If you have any questions, please reach out to Anthony Buono (anthony.buono@yrdsb.ca) or Hailey King (hailey.king@yrdsb.ca)

Music

Williams Music Holiday Wish

Want to go to a Maple Leafs game, free Starbucks? How about \$100 gift card for Cosmo Music?! All this and more could be students' if they participate in the Williams Music Holiday Wish! Wishes can be purchased at lunch in the foyer or on School Cash Online until December 15th. Wishes will be granted on Instagram Live on December 16th after school!

Open Mic

Student can purchase ticket through Cash Online to watch the amazing performances from their peers at our December Open Mic from 3:10 - 4:30 pm.

Guidance

***NEW* Dual Credit Registrations for Semester 2 Open**

Dual Credits allow students in secondary school to take college or apprenticeship courses that count towards both the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) and a postsecondary certificate, diploma, or degree, or an apprenticeship certification. Please see [here](#) for more detailed information.

- 2023 Winter Dual Credit Course List 2023 Winter [HERE](#)
- Dual Credit Application Form [HERE](#)

Post-Secondary Pathways

- **If students are applying to Ontario colleges:**
 - They will need their Ontario Education Number (OEN). Please watch the [How To Apply To Public Colleges in Ontario Video](#).
- **If students are applying to Ontario universities:**
 - They will need their School Number, Student Number and Temporary PIN. Please watch the [101 - How - to Videos](#).
- **If students are going into the skilled trades:**
 - Please visit [OYAP](#), [Skills Ontario](#) and see your Guidance Counsellor.

To help students make decisions about what post-secondary programs to apply to, families are encouraged to research post-secondary pathways with students using the following websites:

- <https://www.ontariouniversitiesinfo.ca/>
- <https://www.ontariocolleges.ca/en/programs>
- <https://oyap.com/>

Attendance Procedures

Extended Absences

Planned absences of three or more consecutive school days require the completion of an "Extraordinary Absence" form at least one week in advance of the leave. The form is available in the Attendance Office. The process includes obtaining signatures from teachers and a school administrator. It is the student's responsibility to catch up on all work missed.

Parents/guardians should contact the Attendance Office to indicate when their child will be absent. The Attendance Office can be reached at 905-727-3131 ext. 100. If the attendance secretary is busy please leave a voice message OR send an email to drgrwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca. If a student leaves school resulting in a late or an absence to a class period, they are to go to the attendance office to sign out. If a student arrives late for Period 1 and before 8:45 a.m., they are asked to report directly to their class where their homeroom teacher will let the office know the time of arrival. If the 8:20 bell has rung, students are asked to stand in the hallway for the anthem and announcements to be completed before proceeding to their period 1 class. For any other period, whenever a student arrives at school after the first scheduled class period has begun they are to report to attendance to sign in.

Students are expected to be in class by the times listed above.

Students, parents, and staff have a role to play in ensuring that students attend classes regularly and punctually. Students are responsible for:

- attending all scheduled classes, and being on time;
- being prepared for classes, and participating fully in the planned learning activities;
- reporting absences (preferably in advance), and presenting proper documentation to staff, and covering the material missed when they are absent.

Absences must be both valid and authorized by a parent. Examples of valid reasons include illness, bereavement, medical appointments, court appearance, etc. If no phone call, e-mail, or note is received by the school, the absence will be considered "truant". Truancies are unacceptable.

Students who have been signed out of classes by a parent/legal guardian cannot remain on school property.

Parent(s)/guardian(s) and students aged 18 and older and students who have declared their independence must report all absences, late arrivals and/or changes to departure plans to the school in a timely manner. Where possible, notify the school in advance by calling the school and leaving a message on the answering machine or emailing the school's attendance address.

If a student is unable to attend school and will miss more than two school days, homework may be requested from the Guidance Department and picked up at the school. Teachers require 24 hours to complete homework requests. If a student is absent due to a prolonged illness, he/she may be required to provide a medical note.

School Calendar for 2022-2023

- Please use this [link](#)

Family Start-Up Forms

Parents/guardians received an email from YRDSB Update with important school start-up forms to complete. **It is important that these forms are completed as soon as possible at the start of the school year as they contain important information and permissions.**

The forms can be found at <https://startupforms.yrdsb.ca/>.

Secondary school students can complete the secondary school student form at <https://startupforms.yrdsb.ca/students>. Elementary school students do not need to complete these forms.

You must be signed in to your child's student GAPPS account to complete the form.

If you prefer to complete the forms on paper or have questions about the information in the forms, please contact the main office.

Website Resources for Families and Students

[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

Safety and Community Notices

York Regional Transit (YRT) has announced a new Route 32 northbound trip, beginning September 14, to meet the afternoon bell time at Dr. G. W. Williams. This information won't be reflected on their website until November 6 but is included in this [flyer](#).

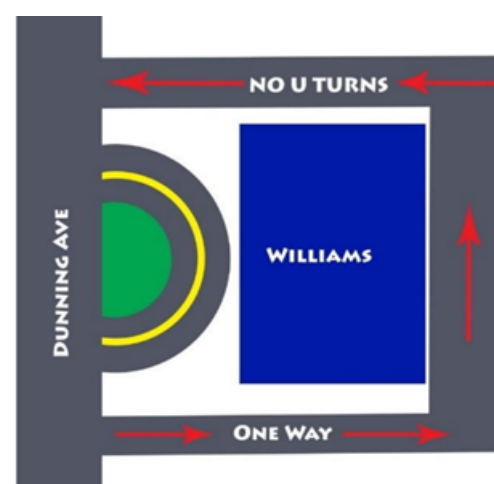
We continue to work with YRT to provide an improved experience for our students riding the 426 buses at the end of each day. Please remind your students to line up single file to board the buses and to stay behind the sidewalk (on the field) until the buses arrive and begin loading. This is important for everyone's safety.

Driveway and Parking Lot

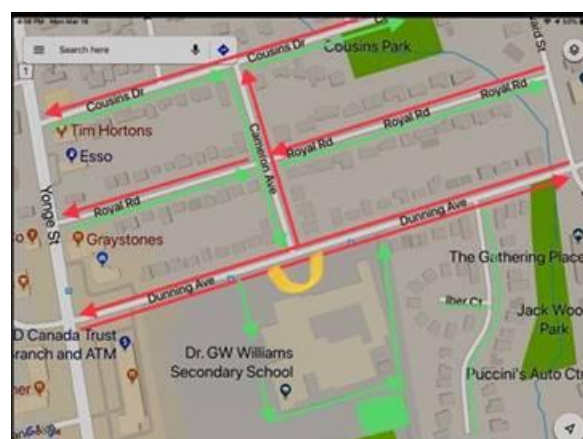
At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 2:50 to 3:10 pm. Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses leave the front driveway loop around 3:10, regular traffic may use this area. To support our efforts to ensure physical distance, we ask that you make arrangements to meet your students at the nearest exit from their classroom (in one of the parking lots) or off school property (down the street, around the corner, etc.). Please see the maps below to support your efforts.



There is one-way traffic in our front driveway loop. In the front driveway loop, drop off/pick up students on the right side; drive through only on the left side. For safety reasons, do not drop off/pick up students on the left side.



If you **MUST** come to the school, enter via the West lot (beside the track, closest to Yonge Street) and drive around the school to meet your child. **DO NOT** block the driveway waiting. There is one-way traffic in the west entrance and on the south (back) side of the school. **It is two-way traffic on the east side of the school, however, during the end of the day pick-up time you will notice the admin directing all vehicles to enter the west lot ONLY so that we have a constant flow out of the east lot.** This makes a significant positive impact on safety for all and makes it easier and less stressful for everyone. When you are able to enter the east lot, do not make U-turns anywhere in the east parking lot from Dunning Avenue to the south parking lot. Making a U-turn in this area creates an unsafe condition for pedestrians and other vehicles. If you need to turn around, please pull into a parking spot and carefully back out.



Please note that Dunning Avenue is a **no stopping zone**. This is noted by the signage along the street and on the map above you can see the red arrows on both sides of the street.

PA Days for Williams (but not necessarily for elementary schools in our area) are:

- February 3
- May 5
- June 30

School Council Meetings for 2022-2023

- February 21
- April 17
- May 15

