



# Williams’ Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of April 29 - May 03, 2024

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  
Erin Gray, 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

## Office Hours

7:45 am - 3:45 pm

## 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://drgwwilliams.ss.yrdsb.ca/>  
**Email:** [dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca](mailto:dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca)

**Social Media:** [@drgwwilliams](#) ([Instagram](#) & [Twitter](#))  
**Attendance:** [drgwwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca](mailto:drgwwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca)

<b>April 29</b>	Midterm report cards e-distributed
<b>April 30</b>	
<b>May 01</b>	SHSM - BSN Osgoode Law School
<b>May 02</b>	Fire Drill - Period 5
<b>May 03</b>	✳ Holy Friday (E) Red Shirt Day - The National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls and Two-Spirit People

## Upcoming

<b>May 06</b>	PA Day
<b>May 07</b>	
<b>May 08</b>	
<b>May 09</b>	
<b>May 10</b>	

To support your family planning, the 2023-2024 YRDSB School Year Calendar is available on the [YRDSB website](#). Additionally, all dates for school events are continually updated on our Google calendar on our [school website](#) and all confirmed events have been updated for 2023-2024 on our website now.

## Message from the Board

One of the priorities in the [Trustees’ Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#) and the [Director’s Action Plan](#) is to Foster Well-Being and Mental Health in both our students and our staff members, with the ultimate goal of improving student success and well-being. The [Student Mental Health and Addiction Strategy](#) “ Within us, Between us, and Around us” sets the actions for a holistic approach to mental health.

Each year, Ontarians mark the first full week of May as Children's Mental Health Awareness Week. This important week is about:

- Increasing awareness of the signs of child and youth mental health problems
- Decreasing stigma
- Understanding that help is available and it works!

For more information on Children’s Mental Health Awareness Week please see [CMHA Mental Health Week](#). One in five Ontario children and youth have a mental health problem; that is about 500,000 kids. Disorders range from anxiety, depression and conduct disorder to eating disorders, schizophrenia, and bi-polar disorder. Left untreated, mental health disorders can lead to school failure, family conflicts, drug abuse, violence, and even suicide. The good news is that help is available and treatment works!

We recognize that many factors contribute to mental health and well-being, for example, physical health, eating, sleep, and social interactions. What is often missed is a student's sense of mattering and belonging. If a student feels valued, welcomed, comfortable and safe in the learning environment they are better able to learn and participate at their full potential. This can contribute to a positive sense of self and positive mental health/well-being. When mattering and belonging are missing, it can take a damaging toll on the student’s mental health and overall well-being.

## School Notices

### For IB Students And Their Families

Embark on an Indigenous Learning Experience! **VANCOUVER** ✈️🌍 **February 2025**. We are so excited to share with you an amazing experiential learning opportunity for our students. The Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School English Department is planning a Coast Salish Canadian IB Language & Literature trip to [Vancouver in February 2025](#), and we would like to formally invite you to our information session. Tentative travel dates are February 12 - February 17, 2025.

The session will be held on May 7th in the School Library at 6:30pm – Please RSVP for more details: [CLICK HERE TO RSVP](#)

If you can’t make the meeting, but are interested in learning more please still RSVP to receive the trip information.

This experiential extended study opportunity is designed to complement your IB Diploma Program curriculum, providing a unique blend of education and adventure. From natural landmarks to immersive cultural experiences, this journey promises to be both enlightening and unforgettable. Don't miss out on the chance to explore, learn, and create memories that will last a lifetime!

We hope to see you in the Library on May 7, 2024 at 6:30pm!

## IB Exams

The IB exams are fast approaching, between April 25th and May 17th, grade 11 and 12 IB students will write their externally assessed IB exams. IB parents were emailed the expectations for students before, during, and after exam times along with the exam schedule. Although we have done our best to ensure that IB exams do not interfere with the running of school, we do ask that all students be mindful that these exams are taking place.

**Supports for Students with Autism and their Families**

This session will support parents, guardians and families with: Understanding Autism, process for diagnosis, YRDSB referral process, school supports, community resources. This session will take place on Wednesday, May 1, 2024 from 6:30pm - 8:30pm at Unionville High School, 201 Town Centre Blvd, Markham, L3R 8G5. Please register by April 28, 2024 at [Supports for Students with Autism and their Families](#)

**Canadian Jewish Heritage Month**

[Canadian Jewish Heritage Month](#) was given Royal Assent in the Legislative Assembly of Ontario (Jewish Heritage Month Act, 2012, S.O. 2012,, c.1 - Bill 17) on April 24, 2012, and in the Senate of Canada on March 29, 2018. As we approach the month of May, staff and students are encouraged to engage in opportunities that celebrate and affirm Jewish histories and the achievements of the Jewish community.

Canada is home to the fourth largest Jewish population in the world. There are close to 400,000 Jewish residents in Canada, and almost half of the number reside in Ontario. Jewish immigrants in Canada can be traced as far back as 1760. Jewish Canadians have proudly contributed to Canadian heritage in all of its facets including the military, the arts, government, business, academia, law, medicine, culture, and sports. Throughout the month of May, we celebrate the contributions Jewish Canadians make in communities across the country.

**Fast Track: Explore Your Future - Student Conference & Career Expo**

The Pathways’ TEam in Curriculum and Instructional Services invites graduating students and their families to participate in [Fast Track: Explore Your Future Conference](#) on Wednesday, May 22, 2024 at the Venu Event Space in Vaughan, ON, L4K 1W8. Please register by using this link [Fast Track: Explore Your Future Evening Event](#) and check out the flyer for more information: [May 2024 Fast Track ParentGuardian Evening Session.pdf](#)

**Spectator Code of Conduct**

As a Board, we value the participation of students, families, caregivers, and others at school events and activities. School sports, arts and cultural events may create future memories for some students and may build school spirit and community.

While it is important to have fans in the stands and the audience, being a spectator at any of our schools is a privilege. The Spectator Code of Conduct, which is a new addition to the [Caring and Safe Schools Policy #668](#), aims to ensure that these events are positive, fun, and safe for everyone. All spectators must follow the Spectator Code of Conduct in order to attend school events.

**Note:** The term spectator refers to anyone attending and watching a school event. The term spectator also applies to anyone participating in a school event (i.e., a team member whose team is not currently playing).

**April is Sikh Heritage Month**

The month of April is proclaimed as Sikh Heritage Month as per [The Sikh Heritage Month Act of 2013](#). Staff, students and their families are encouraged to join Canadians who will be coming together to celebrate how Sikh Canadians have made significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of Ontario and Canada’s social, economic, political, and cultural fabric. This month during the month of April, Sikh Canadians celebrate Vaisakhi, which marks the creation of the Khalsa and the Sikh articles of faith.

**Step out Dance Competition**

Registration is now open for the 18th Annual Step Out Dance Competition featuring a variety of dance with high school and intermediate students competing in two divisions. The purpose of the event is to create a positive forum for students to get together, perform, compete, share and grow. Our school board is filled with many talented students, and this event is all about bringing students together and providing them with the opportunity to express themselves through the arts. The format of the show is similar to American Idol. Each team performs, and then is given feedback from judges. There will be prizes and giveaways throughout the day and winners are announced at the end of the day. The competition will take place on Wednesday, May 22, 2024, 10am-2pm at Richmond Green Secondary School. Register your team by completing the [Step Out 2024 Registration form](#). Registration fee is \$115.

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**Guidance**

**Looking for volunteer opportunities?** - Check out the bulletin board outside the Guidance Office or visit [here](#) for local opportunities.

**Key Dates & Deadlines for OUAC and OCAS** - Please see links below for key dates and deadlines for students who have applied for post-secondary education through OUAC (Ontario Universities’ Application Centre) and OCAS (Ontario Colleges Application Service).

OCAS - [Important Dates 2024](#)

OUAC - <https://www.ouac.on.ca/guide/undergrad-dates/>

**York Region US University Fair** - May 16th 2024 from 5:00pm to 8:00pm at Bill Crothers S.S. (44 Main St Unionville, Unionville, ON L3R 2E4)  
See flyer [here](#) for registration details and [here](#) for a list of schools and NCAA attending.

**Semester 2 Full Disclosure Date** - Courses dropped before May 7, 2024 will not show on a students’ transcript. Courses dropped on or after May 7 will be reflected on the student’s transcript with the mark at the time of withdrawal. Please keep in mind that students need to be enrolled in a minimum of 3 day school courses to maintain full time student status.

**Summer Dual Credit Courses** - **REGISTRATION NOW OPEN**

Registration for the Summer Dual Credits is now open. These courses run in July for 3.5 weeks. See course offerings and registration details below.

The Summer Flyer can be found here: [bit.ly/summerdcflyer](https://bit.ly/summerdcflyer)

Registration is here: [bit.ly/yrdbssummerdc](https://bit.ly/yrdbssummerdc)

**2024 Summer Learning Opportunities** - Click [here](#) for more details. **REGISTRATION THROUGH MYBLUEPRINT IS OPEN**

- **Summer Pathway Programs** - There are several Summer Pathway Programs students can participate in and earn one to two credits, such as Cooperative Education (Co-op), Alternative Learning Experiential Program (ALEP), OYAP-Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, College Dual Credit courses and the Innovation Course at Y-Space in Markham. Click [here](#) for more details.
- **Secondary Summer School** - Information to be available shortly. Click [here](#) for more details.
- **Online Learning Secondary School** - The York Region District School Board provides learners a flexible approach to earning credits in the summer through Online Learning. Online Learning courses are taught by YRDSB teachers using Ontario's Virtual Learning Environment-BrightSpace by D2L. Students are not required to log in at a specific time each day. Classes occur online using an asynchronous model, with synchronous learning opportunities offered with the teacher. Click [here](#) for more details.
- **Other Summer Programs** - Click [here](#) for more details.

**Community Supports** - Click [here](#) to see a listing of local community supports.

**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 and the reason for the absence. 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 [drgwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca](mailto:drgwilliamsss.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.

Students are expected to be in their Period 1 classroom at the start of the day. Classes begin at 8:20 am. If a student arrives late for Period 1 and before 8:35 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 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 2023-2024**

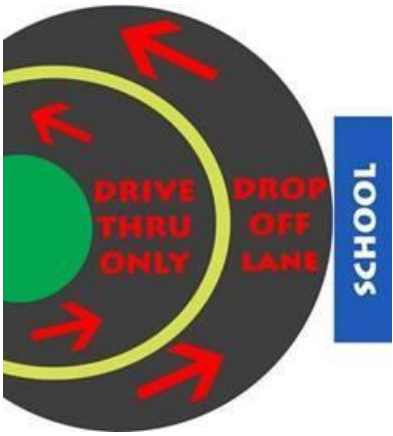
- Please use this [link](#)

**Website Resources for Families and Students**

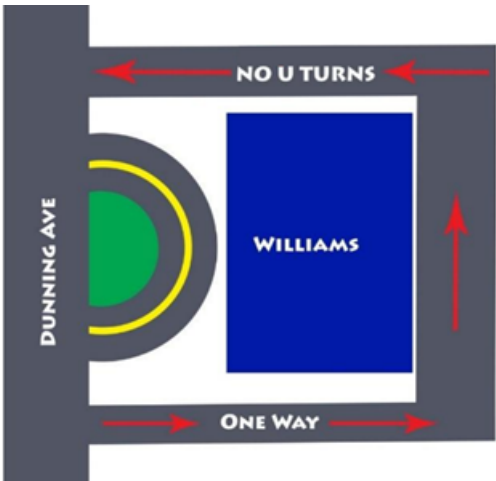
[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

**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.

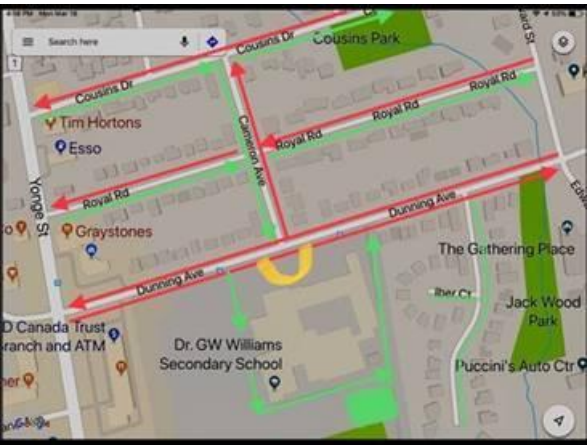


There is one-way traffic in our front driveway loop. In the front driveway loop, drop off/pick up students on the right side; drive through only on the left side. For safety reasons, do not drop off/pick up students on the left side.



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:

- Monday, May 6, 2024
- Thursday, June 27, 2024
- Friday, June 28, 2024

**School Council Meetings for 2023-2024**

- Monday April 15, 2024
- Tuesday May 21, 2024