



# Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of June 10 - 14 , 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)

June 10	Spirit Day: Beach Day
June 11	Spirit Day: Battle of the Grades Grade 9 EQAO Math practice (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students) Grade 12 locker clean out and lock return (Period 2) Fairy Lake Class Trip, 8:30 am - 3:00 pm
June 12	Spirit Day: Celebrity Day Grade 9 EQAO Math (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students)
June 13	Spirit Day: Socks and Sandals Grade 9 EQAO Math (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students) Online Learning Exams, 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm Prom for Grade 12 students at The Manor, 6:00 pm - 10:00 pm
June 14	Spirit Day: PJ Day Grade 9-11 locker clean out (Period 2)

## Upcoming

June 17	El-al Adha Significant Faith Day Regular Instructional Day - Last day of classes for Grade 12 students
June 18	<b>Period 5 GRADE 12 ONLY exams</b> will be held beginning at <u>8:30 am</u> Regular classes for Grades 9-11 students, Last day of classes for Grades 9-11 students
June 19	<b>Period 3/4 Exams</b> beginning at <u>8:30 am</u> for ALL STUDENTS
June 20	<b>Period 1 Exams</b> beginning at <u>8:30 am</u> for ALL STUDENTS
June 21	National Indigenous Peoples Day <b>Period 2 Exams</b> beginning at <u>8:30 am</u> for ALL STUDENTS
June 24	<b>Period 5 Exams</b> beginning at <u>8:30 am</u> for Grade 9-11 classes
June 25	Performance Exams and Credit Completion (individual appointments only) Graduation, Georgina Ice Palace 7:00 - 9:00 pm
June 26	Exam Feedback Day ( <b>shortened</b> classes, AM only)
June 27	PA Day
June 28	PA Day

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 our Principal

Bonjour from Paris! As I write this message I am at the top of Montmartre in Paris with 80 Williams students. We have been fortunate to participate in the 80th D-Day ceremony at Juno Beach yesterday and learn so much about Canada's contributions to the war effort.

Back at school there have been many activities coming to a close. Our sports teams have been busy on the fields and last night we held Arts Night which is always a great celebration of so many students and their creative contributions to our school community.

We are looking ahead to graduation and already enjoyed our first celebration with our graduates when we hosted the grad breakfast last week.

If you haven't seen our yearbook yet, be sure to check it out!! Our yearbook team has done a stunning job with their 'Binge Worthy Year'.

Take care,  
Melissa

## Message from the Director

### Indigenous Peoples Month

June is Indigenous Peoples Month and an important opportunity to recognize, celebrate and learn about the rich history, heritage, resilience and diversity of First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples of Turtle Island.

Indigenous peoples have been on this land since time immemorial and have demonstrated resilience, wisdom and strength in the face of immeasurable adversity. Their deep connection to the land, unique cultures and traditions serve as a powerful reminder of the importance of preserving cultural heritage.

As a district, we are committed to truth and reconciliation and celebration of Indigenous cultures. While we embed Indigenous ways of learning and knowing into our curriculum year round, this month offers a unique opportunity to celebrate Indigeneity in all its forms and to provide opportunities of identity-affirmation to self-identified Indigenous students, staff and families.

Through education and celebration, we hope to take meaningful steps forward in our collective efforts towards Truth and Reconciliation and look forward to celebrating the rich and diverse histories and traditions of Indigenous peoples.

### Pride Month

As we begin our celebration of PRIDE month, I want to take time to acknowledge our 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and community members. We see you, we hear you and we celebrate you! This month is a special opportunity for us to celebrate and highlight all that makes you shine.

Our board embraces and affirms our 2SLGBTQIA+ and it is our expectation that all members of our community contribute to ensuring that everyone, including members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, feel safe, celebrated and included at all spaces in our board. As we’ve said before, allyship is a verb and requires us to come together as a community to actively demonstrate our allyship in meaningful ways as we move forward together. This looks different depending on your role but it is incumbent upon us all to contribute where and how we can. Through education we continue to build capacity for celebration and safe spaces for all identities.

Our commitment to supporting 2SLGBTQIA+ students, staff and community will not waver and we look forward to seeing your vibrant culture celebrated throughout our board.

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**School Notices**

**June Exams**    ***\*IMPORTANT\****

- Please see details about important June dates including exam scheduling. All of this information is available on our school website on the calendar at the left.
- June 11** - Grade 9 EQAO Math practice (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students)
    - Grade 12 locker clean out and lock return (Period 2)
  - June 12** - Grade 9 EQAO Math (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students)
  - June 13** - Grade 9 EQAO Math (for Semester 2 Grade 9 math students)
    - Prom for Grade 12 students
  - June 14** - Grade 9-11 locker clean out (Period 2)
  - June 17** - El-al Adha Significant Faith Day (no new material, assessments, etc.)
    - Regular Instructional Day - Last day of classes for Grade 12 students
  - June 18** - **Period 5 GRADE 12 ONLY exams** will be held beginning at 8:30 am
    - Regular classes for Grades 9-11 students, Last day of classes for Grades 9-11 students
  - June 19** - **Period 3/4 Exams** beginning at 8:30 am for ALL STUDENTS
  - June 20** - **Period 1 Exams** beginning at 8:30 am for ALL STUDENTS
  - June 21** - **Period 2 Exams** beginning at 8:30 am for ALL STUDENTS
  - June 24** - **Period 5 Exams** beginning at 8:30 am for Grade 9-11 classes
  - June 25** - Performance Exams and Credit Completion (individual appointments only)
    - Graduation, Georgina Ice Palace 7:00 pm
  - June 26** - Exam Feedback Day (shortened classes, AM only)

Buses will run every day up to and including June 26th on their normal schedule. The cafeteria will be available for students to work in if they are unable to return home after their exams and are waiting for the bus in the afternoon.

**Grade 9 EQAO Assessment of Mathematics**

For Spring 2024, the administration of the Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics (EQAO) will take place from Wednesday, May 29, 2024, to Wednesday, June 26, 2024, with Individual Student Results reported after each student has completed the assessment. Participating students must complete the assessment in person. Similar to previous years, the assessment will be administered in Grade 9 Math classes towards the end of the course, and prior to the final culminating activity days. In addition, EQAO is another opportunity for students to demonstrate their learning and will only be included for 5% of the mark when it positively impacts the student's overall achievement. Please see the [EQAO](#) website for details.

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**YRDSB and Community Notices**

**Message from Our Trustee Melanie Wright (Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville)**

It is hard to believe we are almost at the end of another school year. I hope that this has been a great school year for you and your child, and you continue to see evidence of your child’s learning and engagement at school.

As a school board, there are several things we have been focused on in recent months that I want to update you on.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the [Multi-Year Strategic Plan consultations](#). The plan sets our priorities and direction as a school board. Your input will help ensure our plan reflects both the [priorities established by the Ministry of Education](#) and the community we serve. The revised plan will be announced in the fall and I look forward to sharing those updates.

I also want to thank everyone who shared their feedback in the budget survey. Again, we want to ensure that the community has voice in these important decisions. We are committed to transparency and you can find information about the [school board budget on the board website](#) that will continue to be updated.

This is an exciting time of year as schools host end-of-year events including concerts and graduations. I want to offer my sincere congratulations to all of our students on your hard work this year, and a special congratulations to the graduating class of 2024. This is an important milestone and a celebration of years of perseverance, commitment, growth and learning. Graduates should feel proud of all they have accomplished. I wish you all the very best for the future and hope you continue to cherish the memories you have made in this school.

I also want to acknowledge all of the many ways that you support your child’s learning and our public education system as family members throughout the year, whether it’s helping with homework, reading communications, making sure they’re out the door on time or volunteering in the school. We recognize that this is a partnership and value the relationship with families.

As we wrap up the school year and look ahead to summer, I want to remind families:

- While report cards are shared online, families can request a printed copy through the school.
- The school board offers a number of summer learning opportunities for students in [elementary](#) and [secondary](#) school.
- You can also access links to [resources to support student learning](#) on the Board website to support summer learning.

I wish everyone a positive end to the school year and a safe, happy and enjoyable summer. We look forward to welcoming back returning students in the new school year.

Melanie Wright, Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville

**Shavuot**

Shavuot in 2024 begins at sundown on June 11th and concludes at nightfall on June 13th. Shavuot is a Jewish holiday that takes place annually fifty days and seven weeks after Passover. For this reason, Shavuot is also known as the “Feast of Weeks.” Shavuot or Shavuos means “weeks” and “oaths” in Hebrew. Shavuot is practiced as a two-day holiday within the Jewish diaspora and as a one-day holiday in Israel. The holiday is marked in the Hebrew calendar at sundown following the 5th of Sivan1 and lasts until nightfall on the 7th of Sivan. Similar to other Jewish holidays, Shavuot is marked by the lighting of candles before sundown.

Shavuot honours two observances. Shavuot recalls the receiving of the Torah and Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai three months after the Exodus from Egypt, this was a transitional moment in the Jewish peoples’ history when they received the divine laws from G-d² and became His Chosen People over 3000

years ago. Shavuot is also associated with a spring harvest pilgrimage festival that was practiced by the ancient Israelites, who would provide offerings of their harvest at the Holy Temple, their first and choicest fruits, and two wheat loaves. To remind of the offering of two loaves, it is the custom of some families to eat two Shavuot meals. The first meal is a dairy meal, and after a specified period (at least an hour), a meat meal. When the Jewish people received the Torah, they were bound to the laws requiring them to keep kosher. Due to the Israelites receiving the Torah on Shabbat, no meat could be slaughtered that day, and no utensils could be made kosher. For this reason, they ate dairy that day. Blintzes, cheese, cheesecakes, quiches, ice cream, and casseroles are commonly eaten on this holiday. The Torah is also metaphorically likened to nourishing milk in the Jewish tradition.

This holiday is observed by studying the Torah, reading the Book of Ruth, eating dairy-based foods, and abstaining from work to focus on introspection and holiday observances. Tikkun Leil Shavuot refers to the tradition on the first night of Shavuot to study traditional Jewish texts and the Torah overnight. Many have the custom of decorating their homes and synagogues with flowers and fragrant plants. Pre-20th century, Ashkenazi<sup>3</sup> communities would adorn their homes with papercuts, known as shevuoslakh (or shavuosl) and royzalakh (or raizelach).

We wish all those celebrating a Chag Shavuot Sameyach or a Happy Shavuot. For further information, please email Inclusive School and Community Services (ISCS): [iscs@yrdsb.ca](mailto:iscs@yrdsb.ca).

**AbiliTay**

16 classes focused on teaching the skills required to be independently successful, delivered through engaging and social group activities. For more information and to register, click [here](#).

**BFCN Scholarships & Awards Applications**

This year, BFCN will be awarding four \$1000 scholarships to qualifying students pursuing education at an accredited Canadian University or College in September 2024. Two scholarships will be awarded to undergraduate students and two scholarships will be awarded to graduate students.

To learn more and apply, complete the [Black Foundation of Community Networks \(BFCN\) 13th Annual Scholarship Application](#) Google form.

**BFCN Aim 2 Achieve Award**

The Aim 2 Achieve Award will recognize Black students who are celebrating achievement after facing adversity. This year BFCN will be awarding two Aim 2 Achieve awards. The recipients of the \$1000 award will be students graduating from a Canadian secondary school or CEGEP and who will be attending an accredited Canadian University or College in September 2024 to pursue undergraduate education. Perseverance and dedication are two qualities that the Aim 2 Achieve winners must embody and believe in. Achievement exists in many different forms, and we want to hear about yours!

To learn more and apply, complete the [Black Foundation of Community Networks \(BFCN\) 10th Annual Aim 2 Achieve Award Application](#) Google form. For questions about the application process or to support the BFCN Scholarship Program please contact [info@bfcn.ca](mailto:info@bfcn.ca).

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**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).

**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/>

**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/yrdsbsummerdc](https://bit.ly/yrdsbsummerdc)

- 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.

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**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 [drgrwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca](mailto: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.



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**

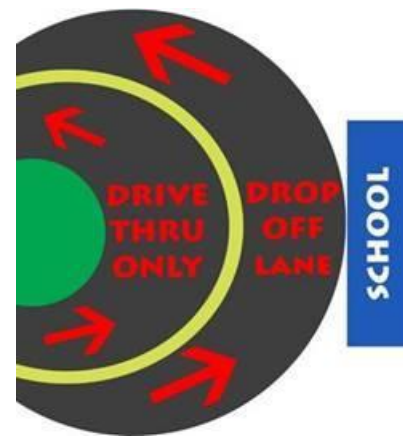
- Please use this [link](#)

**Website Resources for Families and Students**

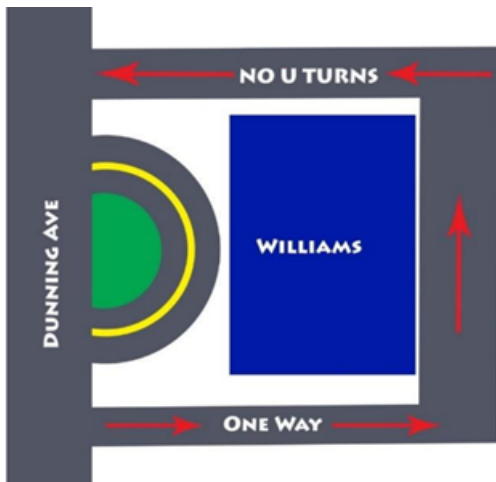
[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

**Driveway and Parking Lot**

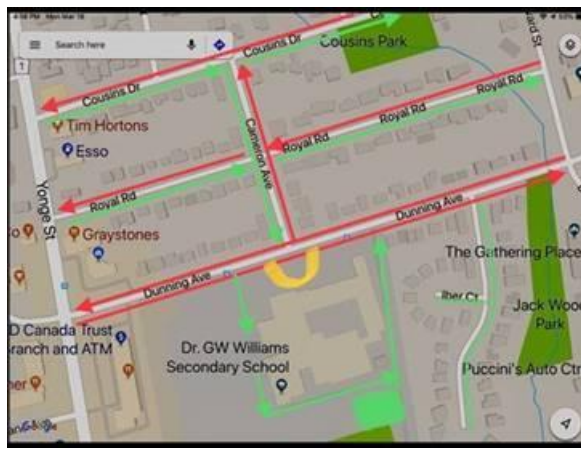
**At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 2:50 to 3:10 pm.** Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses 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:

- Thursday, June 27, 2024
- Friday, June 28, 2024