



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: Friday May 22, 2020

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.

Email: dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca

School Website: <http://drgwilliams.ss.yrdsb.ca/>

Instagram: [@drgwilliams](https://www.instagram.com/drgwilliams)

Message from the Principal

It is nice to finally have some sunnier weather to help us cope with being at home so much of the time. We hope that this edition of the Williams' Tell finds each of your families managing as best as we can. As disappointed as we were to hear earlier in the week that we wouldn't be returning to the school for the remainder of this year, we know that it is in the best interest of everyone's safety.

Last week we took the opportunity to check in with our students regarding their experience working from home through a short survey sent to their GAPPS account. Over 200 students took the opportunity to respond providing us with feedback to incorporate into teacher planning.

Based on the feedback we received from students, we felt it was important to review the expectations of our current learn at home protocol. A full-time student taking 4 courses (the majority of our Grade 9, 10 and 11 students) should have about 35 minutes/course/day (3 hours/week). This works out to about 2.5 hours of work for all of their classes each day.

Of the students who responded to our survey, 44% indicated that they are working on average 4+ hours per day on course work. Additionally, 13.5% of students indicated that their workload was overwhelming. As a staff we are concerned about the amount of time that students are spending on the work that is planned as well as the students who are feeling overwhelmed. When we shared this data with the entire staff this week we agreed that staff members would reach out to each of their classes to gather specific feedback related to how their planning is supporting students so that they can make adjustments to benefit student well-being.

The last question we asked students was whether they would appreciate assistance with managing their workload. 21.5% of respondents indicated that they would appreciate assistance. As of last Friday, we assigned every student who requested assistance a teacher or CYW contact person who was reaching out to those students through their GAPPS accounts to arrange appointments to better understand their learning needs and to support them by connecting with their teachers.

We want to remind all students and families that there are no exams at the end of this semester. Students should be taking this time to engage in learning in its truest sense. The final grade at the end of this semester will not be any lower than the grade students were earning on March 13. For students who did not feel that what they were earning as of March 13 is reflective of their overall ability, now is an excellent time to consistently demonstrate their academic ability and work with teachers to improve their evaluation before reports are issued at the end of June. Given the cancellation of final exams, students will be completing course work right up to June 25th which gives all students ample opportunity to finish curriculum content to prepare for next year's instruction as well as demonstrate their full academic ability.

As we continue to learn ourselves about various means for using technology and ways that students benefit from various technology approaches the staff are evolving their approaches to teaching and learning in this new environment. We encourage students to dialogue with their teachers to support this growth for all.

We know that for our Grade 12s this is a very disappointing time due to the cancellation and postponement of some major milestone events. We continue to discuss how to effectively recognize the achievements of these students in a meaningful way. At this time we are brainstorming ideas related to our grads so that when we receive direction from YRDSB on next steps we will be ready to take action in our school community.

As we look to year end events such as the athletic banquet and music banquet (as examples) we are looking for ways to acknowledge achievements electronically. We will be relying on permissions granted through the Student Consent forms submitted in September to allow us to use photos in these celebrations virtually. We will be reaching out to families who have not submitted this paperwork so that we are able to include all students where applicable. If your circumstances have changed since September and/or you have concerns about us using photos taken throughout the year to acknowledge your child in a virtual presentation please let us know right away.

Thank you for your ongoing support of your students and our teachers as we all work through learning at home. Please don't hesitate to connect with classroom teachers if you have any feedback to support your child's learning.

All the best,

Melissa

Notice:

By order of the Minister of Education, all publicly funded schools in Ontario will be closed until the end of this school year to interrupt the spread of COVID-19. Transportation services, continuing education, permit activities, before and after care programs and daycare are also closed. All school site amenities, including outdoor fields and play structures are closed to the public. Please visit the Board website for [more information](#).

During the school closure related to the current Pandemic, please refer to the attached links for more YRDSB information regarding [Novel Coronavirus Updates](#) and [Coronavirus FAQ](#).

COVID-19 has presented unprecedented issues and concerns for our community, our country and the world. As we focus on keeping ourselves healthy and containing the spread of COVID-19, we must also keep ourselves mentally well. For more information, please visit [Mental Health Resources for students and families](#). Students may contact Guidance to speak with a counsellor by booking an appointment using our [Google Form](#).

Highlighting Our Students

Math Contest

Gavin Song wrote the University of Waterloo's Cayley contest and scored 150 out of 150. There is normally AT MOST one student in the world that scores this high each year. This year, the next highest score was 146. There were a total of 22,445 students who wrote the contest this year (17,801 students in Canada and 4644 international). We are so proud of Gavin's accomplishment!!

Contact Us

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Extensions:
Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

Williams Announcements

School Council

School council will be having a Virtual School Council **meeting on Tuesday May 26th**. Parents interested in participating must register by Monday May 25th at 4pm using the following [link](#) so that they may receive an invite to access the meeting. For more information about the School Council agenda, please visit [School Council](#).

Spirit Wear

Students have been inquiring about the availability of spirit wear that we normally offer again in March. We have asked the supplier and they are offering the opportunity to purchase spirit wear hoodie sweatshirts **before May 30** for completion by the end of June 2020. All orders can be shipped directly to your home for a flat fee or you can do curbside pick-up from Marchant's 849 Progress Ave, Scarborough. For more information about our G.W. Spirit wear please visit [Marchant's website](#).

Grad 2020 spirit wear was supplied through a different company. We have requested to re-open sales with them as well for those grads that missed the opportunity earlier in the year and would still like something. A link will be available early next week and will be sent to all Grade 12 students and families.

Graduating Students

Student Council at Dr. G. W. Williams S. S. would like to highlight the wonderful Grade 12s graduating students this year on our Instagram [@gwsseniors2020](#). We will be creating "future spotlights" for any graduate who wishes to participate.

Graduating students can send Student Council a photo of yourself, name, and post-secondary plans and council will create a little collage for you. It's a great way to celebrate each other's accomplishments and your journey at Williams. For students who are under 18 years old, please have a parent or guardian complete the following [permission form](#) and send it along with your picture and post-secondary plans. Please either complete this permission form either with an electronic signature or by printing it out and scanning it. Send the completed permission form and picture/ post-secondary plans to Ms. King at hailey.king@gapps.yrdsb.ca

Valedictorian Nomination & Voting

Valedictorian nominations closed for the Grade 12s last night. We are just in the process of connecting with prospective nominees to confirm their willingness to stand for this role and will publish the list next Wednesday (May 27) with voting taking place from May 28-May 31 using a Google form sent to graduating student's GAPPS accounts. If your child is graduating, please encourage them to take an active role in choosing their valedictorian. The Valedictorian for the Class of 2020 will be announced on June 2.

Post-Secondary Resource

Due to Post- Secondary School closures, apprenticeship programs, colleges and universities have created virtual tours available online for students who are interested in researching their educational options. For more information and to view the virtual tours, please click on these links: [Apprenticeship Programs](#), [Colleges](#), [Universities](#).

YRDSB Community Announcements

Online Safety Webinars for Parents/Guardians and School Leaders

Principals and vice-principals are invited to send this webinar invitation to parents/guardians of their students and to register themselves for these 1-hour online safety webinars.

Online Safety for Grades 3 - 6: Guidelines for Parents/Guardians

- June 2 at 2:00 pm and June 4 at 7:00 pm. Guest speaker, Paul Davis, will assist parents/guardians to: understand the rules for online safety; define responsible use of technology; and learn about digital trails, cyberbullying, picture taking and sharing.

Navigating Cyberbullying and Cyberviolence for Parents/Guardians of Grades 7-12 Students

- June 9 at 2:00 and June 11 at 7:00 pm. Guest speakers from the field of cyber safety will advise parents/guardians on: navigating the risks of cyberbullying, sexual exploitation, and cyberviolence; building healthy online relationships and safe spaces for students; and using the internet for positive purposes.

Regional Family Engagement

You are invited to join a unique and [FREE live tour from Beit Hatfutsot, The Museum of the Jewish People](#) live tour scheduled for **June 16th from 10:00 am to 11:00 am**. The tour explores synagogues from diverse Jewish communities around the world including from the Caribbean, Egypt, Ukraine, Germany, India, Ancient Greece, Italy, and Poland. You will have the opportunity to view Beit Hatfutsot's world-renowned collection of synagogue models and their associated original artifacts.

If you are interested in this opportunity, please register using the [online registration form by June 12th](#) to book your spot for the live tour. This opportunity is made available for free to YRDSB students and their families. If you would like additional information about the tour and have any questions, please email YRDSB's Community Partnership Developer leonora.buskin@yrdsb.ca. Alternatively, leave her a voicemail with your name and number at 905-727-0022 x 4101 and your call will be returned.

After completing the registration form, you will be sent an email receipt with information on how to access the live tour with a link to the live tour. The live tour is made available through the ZOOM video platform. You do not need to download ZOOM to participate. To ensure privacy, the primary video footage presented during the live tour will be of the tour guide and the tour itself, and participants' videos will be disabled and muted. This set up is to ensure privacy of our participants. You will be able to ask questions during the live tour through a chat box feature. For a small group, it may be possible for participants to ask questions unmuted; however, the chat box will nevertheless be used as the primary method for asking questions.

Black History Month Poster Contest Voting

During the month of February, York Region District School Board held a student poster contest to determine our official Black History Month poster for 2021. We received over 250 submissions, and a panel of experts has narrowed it down to four finalists. In order to determine the winner, the Board will be holding a virtual vote open to all YRDSB students and staff. Voting will take place via this [google form](#) that will also be distributed over social media. Voting is limited to one vote per person and will take place from June 3 - 5.

Distance Learning Adult Programs Available

We are still offering adult programs through distance learning. Improve your skills at home.

Courses available include:

- Adult Literacy and Basic Skills · English as a Second Language · Citizenship Classes · Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada

You can access learning by phone or online. You can register and start learning at any time.

- If you have a question or would like to register for a class, please: · Email uplands@yrdsb.ca.
- Call 905-731-9557 or 905-305-4122 and leave us a message.

Summer School e-Learning

Included below is information regarding the Summer School e-Learning:

- Course dates: July 2, 2020 – July 27, 2020
- Registration period for YRDSB students: May 8, 2020 (noon) – June 25, 2020 (noon)

Process:

- Choose a course, please note students may take only ONE summer school course, either online or in-person: Summer School e-Learning Courses.

- Contact your alpha Guidance Counsellor by email to obtain permission. Include the course chosen and verify you have the necessary prerequisite.

Last Names: A - I → Mr. Fuller: mark.fuller@yrdsb.ca

J - P → Ms. Wilmshurst: debbie.wilmshurst@yrdsb.ca

Q - Z → Ms. Durbacz: sue.durbacz@yrdsb.ca

- Complete your Summer School e-Learning registration online at: [Summer School eLearning Registration](#).
- For further details and information please visit: [YRDSB Summer School e-Learning](#).

Citizenship Classes

Due to schools being closed, Citizenship classes will be available from home until at least May 29, 2020. If you have a question or would like to register for a class, please email uplands@yrdsb.ca or call 905-731-9557 / 905-305-4122. For more information about Citizenship classes, please visit [continued education](#).

NEW! Summer School (Spanish & Mandarin)

Grade 8 Reach Ahead 2020 Summer Credit – Language Program & Grade 9 to 12 Students (Spanish & Mandarin)

- Grade 8 students can now take a Grade 9 credit course this summer in Spanish or Mandarin.
- Grades 9 to 12 students can now take Level B or C summer credit courses in Spanish or Mandarin.
- Prerequisites are not required for any Level B international languages course.
- This is an 18-day program (July 6-29, Monday to Friday, 8:45 a.m. to 3:33 p.m. daily) for one credit introductory (Level B) international languages course.

Register online using [myPathway Planner](#). Please refer to the My Pathway Planner [tip sheet](#) to register. **This program is available at the following summer school locations:**

- Langstaff SS, Richmond Hill
- Milliken Mills HS, Markham
- Sir William Mulock SS, Newmarket
- Tommy Douglas SS, Vaughan

Build A Dream Digital Career Discovery Expo

As a parent or guardian of a young woman, in grades 7 to 12, you are invited to attend the Build a Dream Digital Career Discovery Expo on Wednesday **May 27th from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.** The Build a Dream 'at Home Edition' will give you and your daughter(s) the chance to explore a wide range of career paths in the skilled trades, science, technology, engineering, and emergency services. This FREE event will be packed with panelists, on-demand video libraries, DIY activities, games, prizes and more!

To register for this free event visit: dreamathome.eventbrite.ca. Please note that registration is required and that space is limited.