



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: February 8-12, 2021

Trait of the Month: **Initiative**

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.

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

Social Media: @drgwwilliams ([Instagram](#) & [Twitter](#))

First Day of Face to Face (F2F) School is February 16, 2021 – more details to follow next week

Mon-Fri, Feb. 8-12	All Students Online Period 1 8:20 AM – 9:35 AM Period 2 9:40 AM – 10:55 AM Lunch 10:55 AM – 12:25 PM Period 4 12:25 PM – 1:40 PM Period 5 1:45 PM – 3:00 PM
Thu. Feb. 11	OUAC Deadline - SEM 1 Final Marks
Fri. Feb. 12	Happy Lunar New Year of Ox! In Chinese culture, the Ox is a valued animal. Because of its role in agriculture, positive characteristics, such as being hardworking and honest, are attributed to it.
Mon. Feb. 15	Family Day – No school
Tues. Feb. 16	Face to Face Learning returns – more details to follow next week

Message from the Principal

Our second semester is fully rolling now and teachers have been developing a community of learners in their classrooms to support the norms and routines in their courses for the semester. We thank our teachers for all the work they did to support at-risk learners at the end of the last semester and we are thrilled with the hard work many of these students put in to demonstrate their learning and earn their credits after a challenging semester.

Further to the Ministry's announcement this week, we are looking forward to welcoming students back into the building on February 16. Updated protocols around PPE, distancing, gathering and self-screening will be coming from the board and our school as we operationalize the direction from the province and public health. As always, we will communicate with our school community once we have these details so we are fully prepared when we return on the 16th. Student and staff safety is our #1 priority and I am pleased at how well we have worked together as a school community to protect each other.

This week we collected learning materials from more than 375 students from semester 1. Thank you to everyone that responded to our request and took the time on Monday and Tuesday to come by the school. For those that were unable to return the learning materials on those days, classroom teachers will be in touch regarding outstanding materials for students to bring into the library on Feb 16 and 17 when we return to school.

Thank you to everyone who has been following up on the attendance request I sent earlier this week to ensure that we know where our students are and why they are away. Having this information allows us to engage effectively with students and families to support engagement in learning and to develop supports when needed. Communication between home and school is so important in this education partnership and we value our relationship with each of you in supporting student achievement and well-being.

To those watching the Super Bowl this weekend, enjoy the snacks that go along with it and virtual celebrations. May the best team win!!

Melissa Schmidt

Notices

211 Ontario

Ontario 211 is a free and confidential helpline that connects you to community and social services in your area 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, in over 150 languages. If you need help finding food, housing, financial assistance, mental health support, employment support, support for seniors, winter clothing and/or shelter, call 2-1-1, search <https://211Central.ca/>, text 21166. Live chat & email service is also available.

Literacy Corner

Hello Parents!

This challenge, designed so you can engage with your students at home, will help to strengthen reading, writing, and critical thinking skills!

Literacy Challenge: Take a Stand!

What: This short activity challenges students to take a stand on a topic, and to articulate their opinion clearly. In doing so, students will think about and generate reasons for their opinion, and then express their ideas together in a few paragraphs!

How:

Choose one of the following prompts:

Comedy is the best genre!

Pop music is always bad!

Team sports are better than solo sports!

Extraterrestrial life does not exist!

Have a conversation with your student about the topic. Consider:

What are your initial reactions to the prompt?

What do you already know about the subject?

Did talking about your thoughts and knowledge change, or reinforce, your opinion?

Write down your opinions. Do you agree or disagree?

Explain your opinion! Try starting with the words: "I think I am right because..."

Write down three reasons for your opinion that came out of your conversation

Contact Us

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Extensions:
Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

Share your reasons with each other. Ask each other:

Are these reasons convincing?

If you have the time, try writing your opinion into a paragraph, based on your conversations! If you want, you might try constructing one more paragraph for each reason, as well!

Why: It is always important for people to be able to be clear and articulate about why we believe what we believe. In an increasingly online world, being able to express our thoughts in writing is even more important. This activity builds critical thinking and communication skills. Students will also have a chance to further develop their writing through this activity.

The Alliance of Educators for Black Students (AEBS)

In recognition of Black History Month, AEBS is hosting an opportunity to highlight and honour the achievements of Black students at the YRDSB. By affirming Black students through such initiatives, you are contributing to building a positive anti-racist learning environment in the YRDSB.

STUDENT SELF-NOMINATION

If you are an YRDSB student and would like to nominate yourself, please do so by submitting a reflection in the format of a poem, song, video blog or alternative media file type answering the following question(s): “What does Black Joy mean to you? How are you choosing or affirming Black Joy this Black History Month and beyond?” Please keep submissions under 3 minutes.

CRITERIA

We are selecting students who embrace the following as part of their identity:

- Students who are racialized Black and/or self-identify as Black (including biracial or multiracial students);
- Students from Kindergarten to Grade 12 (K-12).

All nominations and submissions are due Friday, February 12, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. Please note that selected students under the age of 18 will need to have media consent and release form completed by a parent or guardian. Please see the [nomination form](#) for further details. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Jaymyi Lesmond at jaymyi.lesmond@yrdsb.ca

2021 Winter Night School Registration

Night School registration for the Winter session is now open through my Pathway Planner and will close at noon on Thursday, February 11. Please be advised that the traditional in class face-to-face [Night School program](#) (Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6:30 pm to 9:45 pm) will continue to use a remote learning delivery model. The program will be delivered virtually in real-time (synchronous).

The first night of class is Thursday February 18 and the program ends June 22. The deadline for approvals is Thursday February 11 by 3:30 pm. Continuing Education Services (CES) will purge all unapproved course requests after that time.

Adult ESL Program

YRDSB offers Adult English as a Second Language (ESL) programs for those who want to develop effective language skills in speaking, listening, reading, and writing for daily life in Canada. We also offer specialized classes in Citizenship and Conversation. Please visit the enclosed [link](#) for more information. Alternatively, you can access this information by visiting the [Parents](#) tab of our website. Farsi, Russian, Simplified Chinese, and Tamil versions available.

Revised School Screening Checklist

Every day, parents/guardians and students over 18 are responsible for reviewing and adhering to the checklist from York Region Public Health. This checklist has been recently updated to reflect the Ontario government’s revised [COVID-19 Screening Tool for Children in Schools](#) and Child Care.

Please note that the new screening guide applies to children only and the adult screening has not changed. Thank you for working with us to protect the health and safety of students, staff and families and to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Math Enrichment Opportunities

Due to the adaptive model we are following this year, we cannot offer the typical array of math contests and math club enrichment opportunities at Williams. However, thanks to some accommodations made by Universities, it is possible that our students can still participate in some of these activities. To best communicate these opportunities, we have created a "Math Club" Google Classroom that contains links to enrichment opportunities as well as all the information (and relevant links) we currently have with regard to the contests we normally participate in. We will not be running an actual Math Club through the classroom, but we will continue to update it with any pertinent information and/or links throughout the school year. The Math Club Classroom is open to any Williams students who would like to join. Please use the join code: cxwtmf4

Guidance

Course Selections

- Course selections may begin to be submitted electronically on Tuesday, February 16th, 2021 and must be completed by Wednesday February 24, 2021. Information regarding course selection can be found on your graduating grade Google Classroom.

Night School Credit Courses & Night School e-Learning

- Semester Two, winter 2021 Registration for YRDSB Night School and Night School e-Learning is now open. Please visit the YRDSB Continuing Education webpage for course offerings and more information.

Community Services

- For the 2020-2021 school year, the Ministry of Education is revising the 40-hour community involvement graduation requirement to 20 hours of community involvement activities. All up-to-date information is posted on the Graduating Class of 2021 Google Classroom.

Scholarships and Bursaries

- Please check the Graduation Class of 2021 for the most recent updates to Scholarships and Bursaries information.

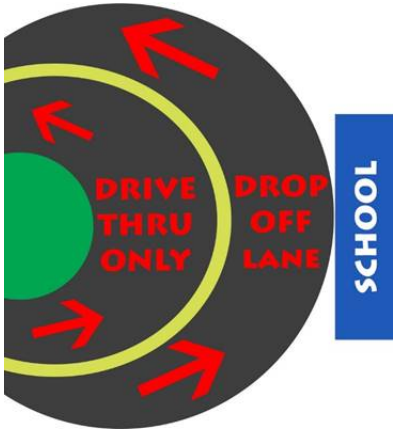
RTC Computer Purchase Program

Once again we are pleased to offer this to our Williams families. Please see the attached flyer below for more information on accessing this program.

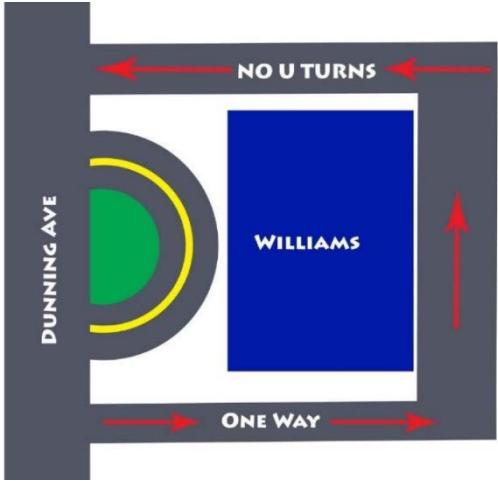
Driveway and Parking Lot

The safety of all students must be everyone’s first priority. Please follow the procedures below.

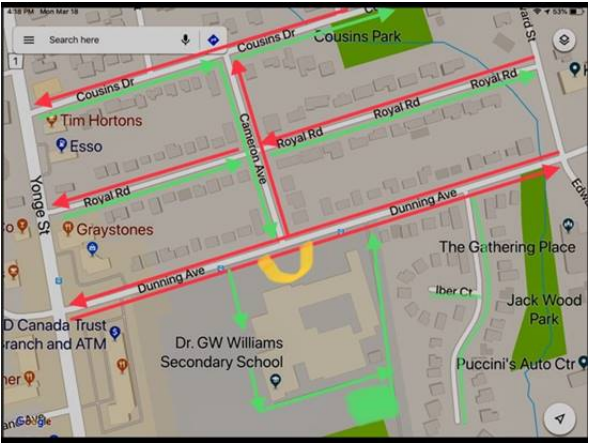
At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 10:40 to 11:00. Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses leave the front driveway loop around 11:00, regular traffic may use this area. To support our efforts to ensure physical distancing, 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.



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 morning pick-up time you will have noticed the admin directing all vehicles to enter the west lot ONLY so that we have a constant flow out of the east lot. This adjustment has made 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. Our School Council previously worked with local by-law officials to identify areas within the neighbourhood that parents can pick up their students. Please note the arrows in green and red to support the effective flow of traffic in the area.

Thank you for your cooperation with this!

School Calendar for 2020-2021

The Ministry of Education has approved the school calendar for 2020-2021. For Williams, some important dates and holidays are:

- Winter Break – Monday December 21, 2020 January 1, 2021
- Family Day – Monday, February 15, 2021
- March Break – Monday, March 15, 2021 to Friday March 19, 2021
- Good Friday – Friday, April 2, 2021
- Easter Monday – Monday, April 5, 2021
- Victoria Day – Monday, May 24, 2021

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

- Monday February 1, 2021
- Friday May 7, 2021
- Tuesday June 29, 2021

School Council Meetings for 2020-2021

- **Tuesday** March 23, 2021
- Monday May 17, 2021