



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: March 15-19, 2021

Trait of the Month: **Perseverance**

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](#))

*****All students are required to complete a [York Region Public Health school screening tool](#) on days they attend school Face to Face (F2F). Upon completion of the self-assessment, complete response to the question: "Have you completed the self-screening test?" in the Confirmation [Form](#). Daily confirmation of the completed screening tool will be required to be shown by secondary school students upon arrival at school.*****

Mon. Mar. 15	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal Deadline for Student Trustee voting, 8:00 p.m.
Tue. Mar. 16	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal Understand Youth Mental Health 7:00-8:30 p.m. - Send an email to Hartman.ps@yrdsb.ca to receive the Zoom link. (see information below)
Wed. Mar. 17	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Thurs. Mar. 18	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Fri. Mar. 19	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal Happy Persian New Year (Nowruz)! This year, Nowruz is on Saturday, March 20 @ 5:37:28 a.m. please see more information in 'Notices' section below.

Mon. Mar. 22	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Tue. Mar. 23	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal School Council Meeting 7:00-8:30 p.m.
Wed. Mar. 24	8:20-10:55 AM: Whole Class Synchronous On-Line Learning Period 1 8:20-8:55 Period 2 9:00-9:35 Period 4 9:40-10:15 Period 5 10:20-10:55 12:20-3:00 PM: Feedback Day – by appointment only Teachers will be offering additional support to students who are not meeting provincial standard (below 70%) during these Feedback Days. Teachers will connect with students and families to offer extended supports to any students who are currently struggling with achievement and appear to be at risk of failing.
Thurs. Mar. 25	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal Teacher Interview Night 6:30 p.m.
Fri. Mar. 26	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal

Message from the Principal

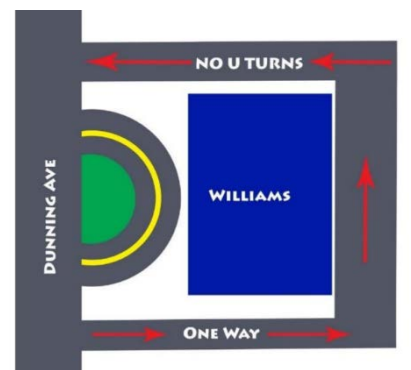
Spring is in the air with the nice weather that we are having. Hope it sticks around!! It was nice to see the parking lot so much lighter this week and many taking the opportunity to walk home. I was asked by a parent to please remind everyone of the one-way around the building to ensure a smooth and safe entrance and exit from the building. Remember NO U TURNS in the east parking lot. In the morning we do have teachers entering to park for the day in the east lot but we ask all parents to follow the loop around the building entering via the west lot to ensure safety for all. The admin are out monitoring this at dismissal but are engaged with screening students in the morning so we ask your cooperation without our supervision. At dismissal, because admin are out and blocking traffic from entering the east lot we are able to use both lanes in the lot for left and right turns. Please remember if you are turning left you can come to the left of the driveway to allow for 2 lanes of traffic exiting. This really works smoothly at the end of the morning and we completely empty the lot in less than 10 minutes. That is pretty quick considering the volume.

Next Tuesday (March 23rd) is our School Council meeting. These meetings are held virtually now which gives all parents an opportunity to drop by and listen in, even if you can only join for part of the time. I will be talking about parent engagement in schools during the Principal Report and looking for input from everyone to support your role in your student's education. Although we are working to raise independent young people and gradually releasing responsibility for them this is best done when parents are actively engaged to support and encourage that independence. We will brainstorm ideas for all parents to balance these elements and to help the school understand what parents are looking for regarding engagement in their student's education.

Speaking of parent engagement, this week you would have received information about our upcoming Teacher Interview Night on March 25. If you already created your Edsby account in the fall then no action is required until the Interview bookings open on March 18. It might be a good idea to try to login just to make sure you remember the password though. Parents without active Edsby accounts should have received an invite to create their account.

We will be welcoming Ms. Meikle to the admin team part-time beginning on Monday. She will be supporting us for the next few weeks as Ms. Conlon is away. We also appreciate the support of Ms. Morrison, Head of Special Education who has been recently helping in the main office as an admin designate during this time. Ms. Morrison will continue to assist us as needed.

Have a great week and remember to 'Spring Ahead' your clocks this weekend!!



Notices

Graduation 2021

We have confirmed that the photographer is able to come to our school April 6-9 for graduation photos. Students will receive an email within the next week with a booking time that they will then need to use to book their time with Lifetouch. Bookings will be opened one cohort day at a time to maximize the time in the school and contact tracing as the photographers are extremely busy trying to fit all York Region schools in, while ensuring appropriate safety guidelines, now that Public Health has given the green light. This is the ONLY opportunity to have grad photos taken at the school. We encourage ALL graduates to book a grad photo as it is important for us to have a graduation photo for the graduation ceremony. Students and/or families that may need assistance with the sitting fee should reach out to their Vice Principal as we want to ensure that every student has their photo taken.

As a reminder, grad gown orders need to be placed by Monday to ensure that we receive them in time for grad photos. Normally we wouldn't give grad gowns out until graduation but this year we know that having them early will support safety by not having to share gowns between students for the photos. Please reach out if we can assist with this for you as again, we do not want any graduates to go without.

We are looking at creative ways to recognize this milestone for our graduating students and will be reaching out to students for ideas in the coming weeks.

Responding to Issues of Racism and Hate in Digital Environments

This week at our staff meeting, all staff were training on responding to issues of racism and hate in digital environments. With the move to online learning, many students have been choosing to add profile images in their Google Applications for Education (GAPPS) accounts. This is the image that appears along with the student's name in Google Classroom, Google Meet, etc.

It has come to the Board's attention that some individuals were using inappropriate profile images, including images that are racist and discriminatory.

We do not tolerate any forms of hate or discrimination. These images cause pain and can make other students and staff members feel unsafe, marginalized, and unwelcome in our learning environments. Appropriate actions are being taken to address this issue when inappropriate profile images have been used.

This learning is one small action our system is taking towards dismantling racism in our digital environments. In the coming weeks between now and the Spring Break in April our Period 1 teachers will be delivering a series of 4 lessons in their classes to support our collective understanding of their actions online and impact these actions may have and ways to dismantle hate and racism online.

The following lessons will be given to all of our Period 1 classes between now and April 9:

1. Freedom of Expression in a virtual community
2. What does online hate look like (overt and covert)?
3. Impact of actions and legal responsibilities
4. What can I do now?

After the learning is completed, students will regain access to uploading profile images to their YRDSB Google account.

Guidance

Course selection verification will be sent home electronically the week of **March 15, 2021**. Please watch for it and submit any changes by Tuesday **March 23, 2021**.

Nowruz 2021

For most of us, March 20th signifies the beginning of a new season, spring and a chance to look forward to warmer weather. For many of us from countries like Iran, Afghanistan, the Kurdish regions of Iraq, Turkey and Syria, throughout Central Asia and many more - The first day of spring is a New Year's Festivity, also known as Nowruz (pronounced NO-ruz). While specific traditions vary from country to country, as different cultures add their own elements, the central theme is the same: a celebration of spring and a time for rebirth and renewal. In recognition of Nowruz, students and parents/guardians are invited to participate in free activities during the month of March which focus on aspects of Nowruz traditions celebrated by different communities. Click [here](#) for more details.

Yellow Brick House Fundraiser

Would you like to make a difference in your local community while having a chance to win an amazing prize? The Yellow Brick House is a local shelter that supports women and children escaping abusive households. This past year has been hard for everyone, and abuse rates in households have increased 20-30% during the pandemic. Our help is needed!

Did you know that just \$150 is enough to provide a woman and child a full night of safety away from danger? From **March 15 to March 30** you can help this important shelter and donate however much you can. Every dollar counts! Each donor will be entered into a draw for the chance to win one of the following gift cards: \$100 for Upper Canada Mall, \$100 for The Real Canadian Superstore, \$25 for Ginger's Cupcakes and Desserts, \$25 for Amazon or \$10 for Wimpy's Diner. If you want to provide help and hope to women and children in this time of crisis please fundraise for The Yellow Brick House.

See the link below to donate **March 15-30**. Thank you Wildcats!

<https://interland3.donorperfect.net/weblink/WebLink.aspx?name=E920263QE&id=94>

Thank you to Walker Head Lawyers, The Real Canadian Superstore (Aurora), Ginger's Cupcakes and Desserts (Aurora), Wimpy's Diner (Aurora) and the Peer Mentors for generously donating a gift card to be won!

Understand Youth Mental Health

On Tuesday, March 16 @ 7:00-8:30 pm Hartman P.S. School Council invites you to a discussion on understanding young people's mental health. Please send an email to Hartman.ps@yrdsb.ca to register. A virtual zoom meeting link will be shared before the event. Every registrant will receive a Parent Resource Kit and Tip Sheet after the event. Click [here](#) for more details about the event.

Drop-In Virtual Support for Students

There are virtual drop-in sessions available every morning, from 8:30 am – 11:00 am, in order to provide a go-to place for students to ask general questions and get extra support while learning from home during their asynchronous days. The sessions will be supported daily by a (SERT) Special Education Resource Teacher. Students should check the Guidance Google classroom to access the link for the drop-in sessions.

Arrivals and Dismissals

Following the guidelines, provided by public health, congregating on school property will be further discouraged as we return to classes next week.

WE NEED YOUR HELP WITH THE FOLLOWING ELEMENTS OF OUR ARRIVAL – DISMISSAL PLAN

Arrivals – please drop your student off at the door closest to their classroom (Front, Back or East) doors as highlighted on the [school map](#). Students may not enter the building prior to 8 am. Please don't arrive to school prior to this time as we will not have staff available to welcome students and complete the mandatory screening

process. It is extremely important in the morning to follow this protocol so that we have adequate staff to check the self-screening confirmations and have students sanitize their hands while entering the building. The designated entrances will ensure the minimum amount of congregating while entering the building.

Please remind your child to leave the school via the [exterior door closest to their classroom](#) and leave the property as soon as their class is dismissed (reminder that we dismiss Odd and Even classrooms 5 minutes early on given days to assist with dismissal congregating).

Make arrangements to meet your child [off school property](#) on one of the side streets near the school (see map below). Not only is the fresh air and short walk good for their mental health, you will have less wait time and your child will not need to congregate on the property while waiting for you.

Updated Self-Screening Guidelines

- Process:**
- Step 1: Secondary students to complete on-line self-assessment [COVID-19 School and Child-Care Screening Tool](#) prior to entering the school daily, on the days they are required to attend Face to Face classes.
 - Step 2: Upon completion of the self-assessment, complete response to the question: “Have you completed the self-screening test?” in the Confirmation [Form](#).
 - o Student receives an email response when they respond “Yes”. The email will include a colour code specific to the day of the week:
o [MONDAY](#), [TUESDAY](#), [WEDNESDAY](#), [THURSDAY](#), [FRIDAY](#)
 - o Upon entering through the school designated entrances, student to provide confirmation of completion of the self-screening by showing the colour coded email response to staff, as they arrive at their designated entrance by way of:
 - On phone – email or picture of email from their computer
 - Hard copy print off of email.
 - If neither option is available, they can provide verbal response confirming completion
 - o Supervising staff member checks with students upon entry.
 - o Students who indicate they “did not” complete the self-assessment are to be directed to the posted COVID-19 School and Child-Care Screening tool to review the questions and provide verbal response to staff member.
 - if “no” to all, direct to class, or
 - if “yes” to any, direct to the designated isolation room for pickup and will be advised to attend an assessment center.

We are aware that student absences are likely to increase due to the increased screening protocols. Students requiring isolation at home during Face to Face classes should connect directly with their teacher who will support them with learning at home during their absence.

Student Attendance

Thank you to everyone for supporting us with our efforts to increase the tracking of student attendance. To ensure we can continue to support student engagement and well-being we require accurate attendance records. **Parents\guardians are required to justify every student absence with a reason.**

Students currently attending the adaptive model must contact via email (drgwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca) or phone call (905-727-3131, ext. 1) prior to 9 am in the morning regarding a student absence.

For any student over 18, they are responsible for reporting their own absences unless they have completed a [Consent Information Sharing For Students at the Age of Majority](#) form.

If you have any questions about your child’s attendance or supports available at the school, please contact your child’s Vice Principal:
Mr. Brar (Harmandeep.brar@yrdsb.ca)
or their [Guidance Counsellor](#).

Report It

Our schools should be safe, welcoming and inclusive places for everyone. It is important that students know what to do if they witness or experience inappropriate behaviour or incidents of hate or discrimination.

- There may be situations when you can safely step in and intervene and help.
- Talk to an adult at school, family member or other trusted adult.
- Report the event without the person involved knowing using our online reporting tool, Report It.

Report It lets you share information about inappropriate student behaviour or incidents of hate or discrimination. You can use the online form to report:

- bullying, drugs, cheating, vandalism, harassment, violence or any other inappropriate behaviour
- incidents of discrimination or hate, including anti-Indigenous racism, ableism, anti-Asian racism, anti-Black racism, antisemitism, classism, homophobia, Islamophobia, sexism, transphobia or other forms of hate

You can report events that happen at school, at school-related events, online or off school property if it negatively affects a student or the school climate. You can also choose to make a report anonymously.
Complete reports are shared with the school to investigate and respond.
Acts of discrimination, hate and bullying are never acceptable. Using the Report It tool is a way of standing up for each other and for ourselves.
You can find Report It on the homepage of the Board website at www.yrdsb.ca and on the homepage of every school website, or watch this [short video](#) to learn more.

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.

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 [Newsletters](#) tab of our website. Farsi, Russian, Simplified Chinese, and Tamil versions available.

Math Enrichment Opportunities

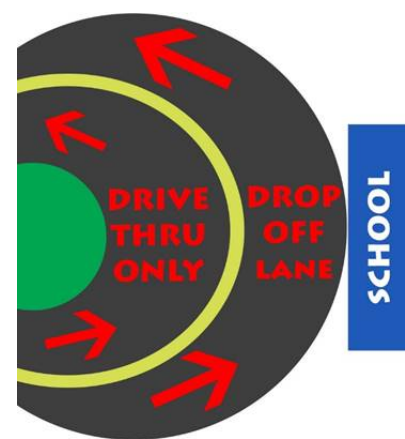
Due to the adaptive model we are following this year, we cannot offer the typical array of math contests and math club enrichment opportunities at Williams. However, thanks to some accommodations made by Universities, it is possible that our students can still participate in some of these activities. 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

Driveway and Parking Lot

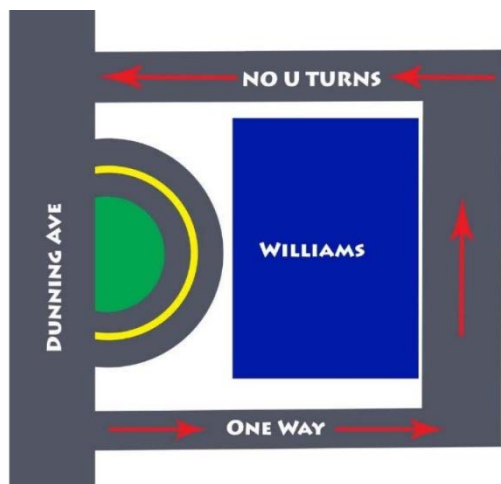
The safety of all students must be everyone’s first priority. Please follow the procedures below.

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

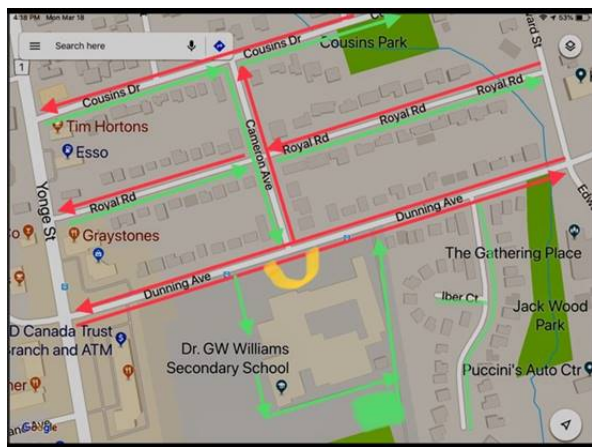
11:00, regular traffic may use this area. To support our efforts to ensure physical distancing, we ask that you make arrangements to meet your students at the nearest exit from their classroom (in one of the parking lots) or off school property (down the street, around the corner, etc.). Please see the 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
- Good Friday – Friday, April 2, 2021
- Easter Monday – Monday, April 5, 2021
- Spring Break – Monday, April 12, 2021 to Friday April 16, 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