



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: March 22-26, 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.*****

School Council Meeting this week – Tuesday (see agenda below)

Mon. Mar. 22	Period 4, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Tue. Mar. 23	Edsby bookings for Teacher Interview Night close at 9 am 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. Agenda (with GoToMeeting link)
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 – note Rotation change 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

Mon. Mar. 29	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal Second Day of Pesah (Passover) Passover, Hebrew Pesah, or Pesach, in Judaism, holiday commemorating the Hebrews' liberation from slavery in Egypt and the "passing over" of the forces of destruction, or the sparing of the firstborn of the Israelites, when the Lord "smote the land of Egypt" on the eve of the Exodus.
Tue. Mar. 30	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Even numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Wed. Mar. 31	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort A, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Thurs. Apr. 1	Period 5, 8:20-10:50 AM, Cohort B, F2F Odd numbered classrooms 10:45 dismissal
Fri. Apr. 2	Good Friday – No School

Message from the Principal

Congratulations to Bruce Yu who was nominated by the students of YRDSB to represent them as the 2021-2022 Student Trustee!! We are so proud of Bruce's accomplishments in garnering the support of so many across the system and are sure that he will represent them well in the board room next year.

By now all students should have received their Interim Report Cards in their GAPPs accounts. Teachers are looking forward to meeting with parents and guardians next Thursday evening to further discuss student progress and supports. The next opportunity for a formal update will be towards the end of April when the mid-term report cards are issued.

In the past week students and staff have had the opportunity to hear from our Director Louise Sirisko on our efforts to dismantle all forms of racism. We have begun discussing as a school the actions we can each take to address and respond to all acts of racism, anti-Black racism, discrimination and hate experienced by students, staff or any member of our school communities. As a school, we are committed to the learning and in turn the actions required to make a difference moving forward so that all students, staff and communities feel safe, welcome and included in our buildings.

Next week at our school council meeting we will be looking for feedback on parent and community engagement in our school. I hope that many parents will have the opportunity to drop in to the virtual meeting on Tuesday night as we would love to gather as much input as possible.

This week we welcomed Mrs. Theresa Meikle to our building. Mrs. Meikle is a retired Vice Principal from YRDSB and we are happy to have her with us supporting our students and staff in Ms. Conlon's absence.

Take care and stay safe!
Melissa Schmidt

Contact Us
The Dr. G.W. Williams SS
39 Dunning Avenue
Aurora, Ontario
L4G 1A2

Email:
dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca
(P) 905-727-3131
(F) 905-727-8067

Extensions:
Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

Notices

Graduation 2021

Communication was sent home today with photographer booking times for our potential graduates. Ms. McKie in the main office has worked hard to assign all graduates a photograph time when they are already scheduled to be in the building and to assign our SVS students times when they can come at the end of their day when limited staff and students are in the school. The Lifetouch 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 with Lifetouch 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.

The grad gown order was placed this week!! 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. We will be distributing the grad gowns as students come for their photos the first week of April. If you have not ordered a gown yet, please contact the main office for assistance, 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.

Guidance

- Course selection verifications have been sent to students, parents and guardians electronically. Please submit any changes by Tuesday **March 23, 2021**.
- Summer School information is not available yet. Please watch for new information in early April.
- Volunteer hours for graduating students are due May 25, 2021.
- Non-YRDSB and/or Private school course marks for graduating students are due June 18, 2021.

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!

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 (drgwwilliamsss.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

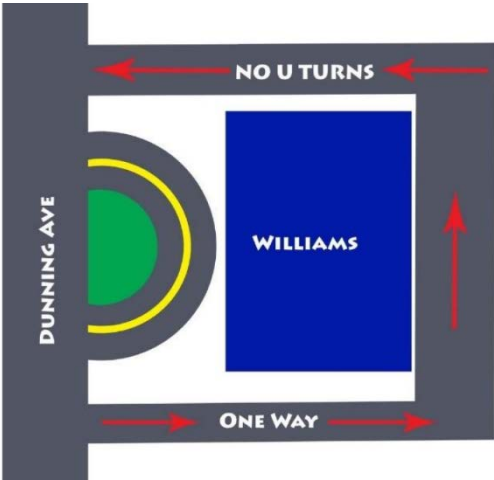
Driveway and Parking Lot

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.

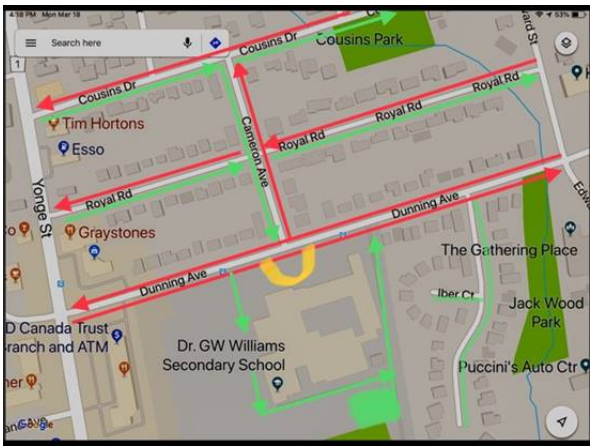


There is one-way traffic in our front driveway loop. In the front driveway loop, drop off/pick up students on the right side; drive through only on the left side. For safety reasons, do not drop off/pick up students on the left side.



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 [Agenda](#) ([Minutes – January 2021](#))
- Monday May 17, 2021