



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: Apr 10 - Apr 21, 2023

Trait of the Month: Fairness

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
Susie Mitchell, VP (A-Le)
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Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

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://drgwilliams.ss.yrdsb.ca/>
Email: dr.g.w.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca

Social Media: [@drgwilliams](#) (Instagram & Twitter)
Attendance: drgwilliamss.attendance@yrdsb.ca

This week:

April 10	Easter Monday. No school.
April 11	OBA Small Ensemble Festival 9 am - 3 pm, U of T Scarborough CPR/1st Aid - G12 SHS
April 12	York U Jazz Festival 7:30 am - 2:30, Accolade East Bldg, York U. Jr. Badminton Tournament, Newmarket HS. Depart home school 7:30 am. International Day of Pink YRAA Finals for rock climbing
April 13	CPR/1st Aid - G12 SHSM
April 14	Vaisakh (Hindu festival) Holy Friday (Christianity, Eastern)

Upcoming

April 17	School Council Meeting, School Library, 7:00pm-8:30pm
April 18	Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day (Judaism)
April 19	
April 20	SEM 2/TERM 2 starts Flag football Game at Dr JM Denison SS. Depart from home school at 1:45 pm.
April 21	First Day of the Festival of Riḍvān (Baha'i) Īd al-Fiṭr (Islam, end of Ramaḍān)

To support your family planning, the 2022-2023 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](#).

The proposed YRDSB 2023-2024 school year calendars have been sent to the Ministry for review and approval. These calendars may be accessed on the [YRDSB website](#).

Please note: Calendars are not official until they receive formal Ministry approval which is expected in late May 2023. Our Google calendar will be updated online as soon as Ministry approval is received.

Message from the Principal

As we look towards planning for the coming year, course verifications were sent to all students today. It is important to review this information carefully and complete the form included to ensure that an accurate and complete timetable can be built for every student. Information about course cancellations (due to low enrollment) is included as students may need to make alternate selections.

All parents\guardians are encouraged to join us for the April School Council meeting on April 17th at 7:00 pm. Our library, Ms. King is going to be presenting to parents on AI-Chat GPT applications in the classroom as the learning component of the meeting.

During this holiday season we know that we have many students and staff that will be celebrating Passover, Easter (Eastern and Western), Vaisakhi, Saka New Year, Yom HaShoah, Ridvan and Id al-Fitr. We wish all families in our school community the best through these celebrations and hope all have the opportunity to be renewed as we approach this season and better spring weather.

All the best to everyone through this long weekend.

Take care,
Melissa Schmidt

School Notices

International Day of Pink

April 12, 2023 is the International Day of Pink. The International Day of Pink is a day when communities across Canada and across the world unite to celebrate diversity and raise awareness about the need to stop homophobia, transphobia, discrimination and all forms of bullying. On this annual day in April, individuals wear pink to show respect for diversity and to demonstrate support for learning and working environments which are safe and inclusive of people from all different backgrounds. International Day of Pink is intended to create a more inclusive and diverse world. The Day of Pink originated in Eastern Canada, after a few young students decided to stand up against homophobia, bullying and toxic masculinity (CBC). Although the first Day of Pink occurred 15 years ago, students continue to experience homophobia, transphobia and biphobia. Schools and workplaces need to commit to raising awareness, building inclusion and eliminating discrimination for students in 2SLGBTQI+ communities.

YRDSB and Community Notices

Vaisakh (Hindu and Sikh festival)

Vaisakhi, the Sikh New Year, is celebrated in April every year, celebrates the harvest. It is especially important in North India, celebrated in several different ways across different countries.

For Sikhs, Vaisakh celebrates the birth of the Panth Khalsa order (the Order of the Pure Ones) established by Guru Gobind Singh. It is at this time that Guru Gobind Singh gave the Khalsa order the five distinct symbols of purity and courage which would make Sikhs identifiable: the Kesh (unshorn hair); Kangha (the wooden comb); Karra (the iron bracelet); Kirpan (the sword) and Kachera (underclothing).

Holy Friday (Christianity)

The Christian religious holiday commemorating Jesus Christ's crucifixion, his death at Calvary.

Yom HaShoah, Holocaust Remembrance Day (Judaism)

It is held in memory of the six million Jews who died as victims of Nazi atrocities (World War II) between 1933 and 1945.

Festival of Ridván

The Festival of Ridván (pronounced Riz-wan) commemorates the anniversary of the declaration of Bahá'u'lláh of His prophetic mission to his followers in 1863, proclaiming His identity as the promised Manifestation of God. Ridván is celebrated over the twelve day period that Bahá'u'lláh spent in the Najibiyyih Garden just outside of Baghdad and across the Tigris River. Bahá'u'lláh later referred to it as "The Garden of Ridván". Ridván can be translated as "Paradise". The dates for the Festival of Ridván are determined from the date of another Bahá'í Holy Day – Naw Rúz (held on the Equinox), and will therefore vary from year to year between April 20 – 22.

Īd al-Fiṭr (Islam)

The religious holiday is celebrated by Muslims worldwide because it marks the end of the month-long dawn-to-sunset fasting of Ramadan. During Ramadan, most Muslims fast during the hours of daylight and increase their focus on prayer and contemplation. At the end of each day the fast is traditionally ended with a prayer and a light meal called the iftar. Ramadan is considered a time for Muslims to recommit themselves to cultivating spiritual renewal within themselves and their communities, as well as practicing compassion and generosity for others.

Diverse Minds Creative Writing Competition

B'nai Brith Canada invites high school students to participate in the [Diverse Minds Creative Writing](#) Competition. Students are asked to reflect on the values of diversity and inclusion by writing and illustrating a story for elementary school students. Deadline is April 16, 2023. For more information visit:

<https://www.bnaibrith.ca/diverseminds/>

April Triple P Parenting Sessions

Many familiar parenting problems have very simple solutions that can be applied with some effort and focus. Triple P's easy-to-understand and practical strategies have been shown to help families in all types of situations. Click [here](#) to RSVP.

Budget Survey and Consultations 2023-2024

YRDSB is inviting staff, families, and community members to participate in the annual budget consultation process taking place until April 26, 2023. These opportunities for input provide the Board with important information about how staff and the broader community would like the budget to be allocated to continue supporting student achievement and well-being in York Region. Survey The online [survey](#) will be available until April 26, 2023.

Public Consultation Dates:

In addition to the survey, two virtual consultation sessions will take place on the following dates and times:

- Monday, April 17, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
 - o [Register](#) for online access to the consultation session. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar; or,
 - o For listen only, telephone access to the webinar, dial 647-497-9429 and enter Access Code 970-362-596.
- Wednesday, April 19, 2023, 7:00 p.m.
 - o [Register](#) for online access to the consultation session. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar; or,
 - o For listen only, telephone access to the webinar, dial 647-497-9389 and enter Access Code 956-757-755.

Thank you for your time and input. If you have any questions regarding the budget process, please email budget@yrdsb.ca.

Guidance

- **Prom Prep Event** - Find the perfect dress or formal wear for your prom or graduation for FREE! Pre-registration is open until April 12th to all prom-goers and grade 12 graduates. Please [see flyer](#) for more details or visit girlsincyork.org and register under the "Events" tab. The event is on April 15th from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm at Newmarket's Old Town Hall!
- **Community Involvement Hours Review** - Please complete this quick questionnaire regarding the Community Hours Policy. We want to make sure to take your feedback into consideration: [click here](#) for the Community Involvement Hours Review for Parents/Guardians. The form closes on April 6, 2023 at 4pm.
- **Free Skill-Building Program** - After-school sessions that run for 4-6 weeks starting **April 17** (45 minutes each) to help students prepare for the transition to colleges and universities. Topics include understanding strengths and needs, organisation and time management, and study skills and exam prep. Please complete [this form](#) for more information and to express interest.
- **2023 Summer School Registrations Open April 11th** - The York Region District School Board will once again be offering acceleration (in-person) and reinforcement (remote) courses during the summer. The hours for all courses are 8:45 a.m to 3:33 p.m. with two 15-minute scheduled breaks and a 40-minute lunch period. Please have your student register on myBlueprint > Continuing Education > Explore Courses and return the signed permission form to the Guidance Office.
 - o Acceleration courses start Wednesday, July 5 and end Friday, July 28.
 - o Session 1 for reinforcement courses start Wednesday, July 5 and end Monday, July 17.
 - o Session 2 for reinforcement courses start Tuesday, July 18 and end Friday, July 28.
- **Full Disclosure** is May 8, 2023 - Semester 2 courses dropped by this date will not show on a student's official transcript.
- **Course Selections** for the upcoming school year are now closed. Please have students see their alpha guidance counsellor if they have any questions or concerns.
- Please note that **Summer School Registrations** will open in late spring. Students must enrol officially through their pathway planner even though they've expressed interest in their course selections.
- **Summer Pathways Programs** - Please see [this flyer](#) for Summer Dual Credits, Youth Innovation by Design, and Co-op summer opportunities for students. Students can register using the links provided.
- **Graduates of 2023** must complete and submit their volunteer hours by **Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023**.

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. 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 drgwwilliamsss.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. If a student arrives late for Period 1 and before 8:45 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 and announcements to be completed 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 2022-2023

- Please use this [link](#)

Website Resources for Families and Students

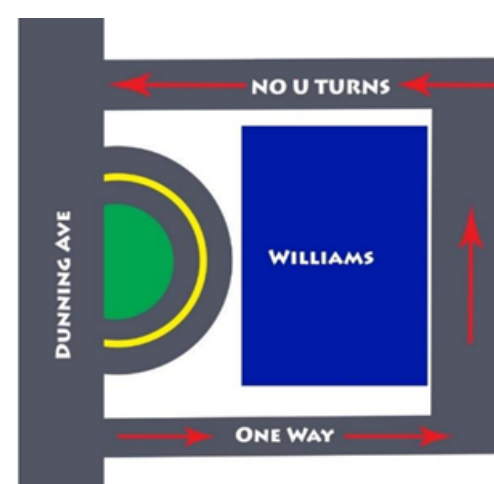
[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

Driveway and Parking Lot

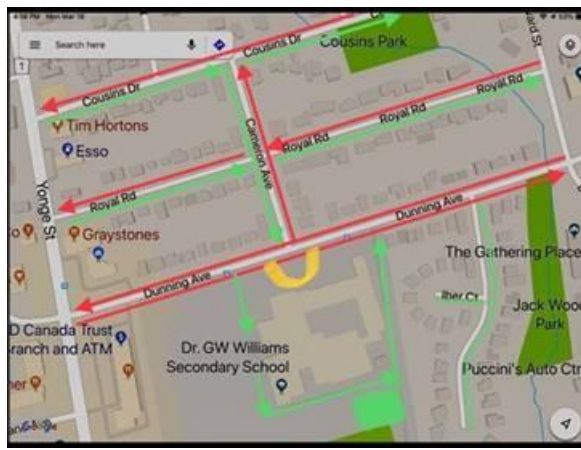
At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 2:50 to 3:10 pm. Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses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

- May 5
- June 30

School Council Meetings for 2022-2023

- April 17
- May 15