



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: Feb 20 - Mar 3, 2023

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.

The Dr. G.W. Williams SS

Administrative Team

Melissa Schmidt, Principal
Susie Mitchell, VP (A-Le)
Andrew Gazaneo, VP (Li-Z)

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Phone Extensions:

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.williams.ss@yrdsb.ca

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

This week:

Feb. 20	Family Day, no school
Feb. 21	Leadership Team Meeting (3:15 pm - 4:30 pm) School Council Meeting, 7 pm, Library (Agenda)
Feb. 22	Jr Girls Volleyball Tournament vs 1) Sutton DHS, 2) Aurora HS at Sutton District SS 3:30 pm Math Contest Gr 9-11 (PASCAL - Gr. 9, CAYLEY - Gr. 10, FERMAT - Gr. 11) Pink Shirt Day Quebec City Tour virtual information session for Gr 10 - 12, 6:30 pm - see information below
Feb. 23	
Feb. 24	Student course selections due.

Upcoming

Feb. 27	Choir meets every Monday in room 122, 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm
Feb. 28	
Mar. 1	
Mar. 2	D-Day (June 2024) Extended Study Tour Information Session, 6:30 pm - see information below
Mar. 3	Greater Toronto Invitational Festival of Bands at York University, leave 4:30 pm

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](#).

Message from the Principal

Second semester is in full swing at Williams. Students are settled into their courses and we are now looking ahead to the 2023-2024 school year. Course selections opened for submission last week and **must be completed by this Thursday (February 24th)**. It is important that all students assess carefully what courses they will need and want for the coming school year as our staffing depends on this.

As a follow-up to the letter that was sent home to families last week, I want to thank upstanding students and staff that identified and called out the inappropriate act of anti Black racism and ableism to support our investigative efforts to address and issue consequences and initiate further education with students responsible. It is important that all students are reminded of their commitment to abide by the YRDSB Acceptable Use of Technology Agreement and be aware of digital citizenship responsibilities. This applies to any online interactions that have an impact on the school climate (whether during or outside of school). The admin team is committed to ensuring a safe environment for our students and staff and are especially concerned about the impacts of this incident on some of our staff members. We will continue our work in creating a truly equitable school where incidents such as these remain as outliers and not reflective of our school community. This work will also assist us in ensuring everyone will continue to demonstrate the ethical standard expected of all members of our school community. This work cannot be done in isolation and requires the commitment of all members of the school community (students, staff and families) to contribute in positive ways to resolve concerns and immediately call out inappropriate or hurtful actions so they can be addressed in a timely way.

We have two study tours being planned currently. Please see the information below regarding information sessions for each of these opportunities. The Quebec tour is for May of this year and is approved in principle (dependent on enough student interest) and the D-Day Trip for June 2024 will be submitted for approval once the staff determines there is sufficient interest. We would like all students that would be interested to have the opportunity to participate in these extended study trips. We know that trips like these are expensive. Please reach out to the staff organizers or the administration if there is any way we can assist your student to be able to participate.

Enjoy this long weekend. We hope that our students and staff engage in some much needed rest and we look forward to seeing parents at our School Council meeting on Tuesday.

Melissa Schmidt

School Notices

Course selections

We are already beginning to plan for the 2023-2024 school year. Students have participated in the course selection assembly in early January. They will be able to begin locking in their course selections as of February 16 and **must do so by February 24th**. Our Guidance and Student Services staff are available to support students with their decisions and the course selection process. Please see Guidance information below or ask your child to make a Guidance appointment in TeachAssist.

Secondary Online Learning Graduation Requirement

Students are now required to earn two Online Learning credits to earn their OSSD, beginning with every student who entered Grade 9 in the 2020-21 school year. The graduation requirement is intended to support students in developing familiarity and comfort with working and learning in a fully online environment, as well as developing digital literacy and other important transferable skills that will help prepare them for success after graduation and in all aspects of their lives. Please click the [link](#) for further details.

Bullying Awareness - Pink Shirt Day, Feb. 22

Pink Shirt Day is a globally recognized day in support of anti-bullying, upstanding behaviour and simple acts of kindness. On February 22, 2023, we are encouraged to practice kindness and wear pink to show that we do not tolerate any form of bullying and uphold these values throughout the year!

Grade 12 Art student at Aurora Cultural Centre

Since 2011, the Aurora Cultural Centre has showcased upcoming artistic talent from the graduating students across Aurora. This year, they received 84 submissions from 53 students. Some of our Grade 12 students have entered their artwork in the Mayors Celebration of the Arts at the Aurora Town Hall. The work will continue to be on display until May 18, 2023. Click [here](#) for more details.

Quebec City Tour virtual information session for Gr 10 - 12

It is with great pleasure that we announce that our Quebec City trip has been approved in principle for planning. We would like to invite family and students in Grades 10 - 12 interested in learning more about this amazing opportunity to attend a virtual information session next Wednesday February 22 at 6:30PM. This information session will be hosted by our tour operator. Please feel free to reach out to Mr. Buono with any questions or concerns (anthony.buono@yrdsb.ca). Please click [here](#) to join the session.

Extended Study Tour Opportunity - 80th Anniversary of D-Day

Williams is planning a trip to France, Belgium and the Netherlands in celebration of the 80th anniversary of D-Day! We're so excited to offer this potential travel opportunity to our students and look forward to sharing more details with you. We're holding an information session on **March 2nd at 6:30pm in the library** at school. If you're interested in learning more about this trip, please RSVP your attendance. Posters are placed around the school with this QR code that can be scanned to RSVP to the info session. If you can't make the session but are interested in finding out more, scan the QR code, indicating that you cannot attend but want to receive more details. If you have any questions, please reach out to either of us!

Thank you,

Sarah Isber & Jordan Denton

sarah.isber@yrdsb.ca - jordan.denton@yrdsb.ca



Music Department

Choir Meeting

Do you like to sing? Missing vocal music class already? Our choir will meet every Monday in room 122 from 3:00 pm - 4:15 pm. We are looking for all voice parts and no experience is necessary.

Greater Toronto Invitational Festival of Bands

Event is at York University (4700 Keele St, Toronto, M3J 1P3). Student will leave school at 4 pm and return at our school 9:30 pm. Parents are welcome. Click [here](#) to purchase tickets.

YRDSB and Community Notices

Ontario Secondary School Literacy Test (OSSLT), Spring 2023

The spring administration of the OSSLT is scheduled to occur between March 1 - April 26, 2023. The test is online and will be open to eligible students who did not participate or were not successful in the fall administration. The majority of our students wrote the test in the fall so that students would have a second opportunity to achieve their literacy graduation requirement as early as possible, with only the second result considered.

Skate with Pride Event

This Family Day [event](#) is from 10:00am - 3:00pm at 90 Wexford Dr. Georgina, ON. You can also volunteer for the event on the website under the Get Involved!

Centre for Black Student Excellence

The Centre for Black Student Excellence is a space of learning and discovery committed to the promotion of dismantling anti-Black racism and amplifying voices that have been historically marginalized. Please click [here](#) for more info.

Centre for Black Student Excellence Mailing List

This was a key commitment in the [Dismantling Anti-Black Racism Strategy](#): to “develop mechanisms to communicate directly with Black parents”

Family members can sign up to the Centre for Black Student Excellence Mailing List to receive:

- updates from the Centre for [Black Student Excellence](#)
- information about programs, initiatives and events related to supporting Black students, celebrating Black excellence and dismantling anti-Black racism
- information from community partners about programs that support Black students Families can sign up for the mailing list using this [subscription form](#), available at www.yrdsb.ca/blackexcellence, and can unsubscribe at any time.

Fostering Your Child's Emotional Resilience (培養孩子的情緒適應力/ 培养孩子的情绪适应力)

This session in Cantonese and Mandarin will introduce key strategies of how parents can encourage their child to express their feelings. 這講座將讓大家學習如何有效的鼓勵你的子女表達他們的情緒 这讲座将学习如何有效的鼓励你的子女表达他们的情绪

Cantonese Session: Monday, February 27th, 2023, 7:00-8:30 pm

Mandarin Session: Monday, March 6th, 2023, 7:00-8:30 pm

Please click [here](#) to register.

Mental Health Newsletter/Tip Sheets For Parents February 2023

A focus on "[Feeling the Warmth of Winter](#)". As many highschool students have finished exams and begin a new semester continue to grow and develop, we hope to share some tips for maximising enjoyment with your family, and ways to find support at this time. We will also be sharing some helpful tips about March Break, Family day, and available recreational community resources.

Celebrating Black Excellence

As a continuation of our Celebrating Black Excellence campaign, YRDSB will be celebrating Black History Month with Celebrating Black Excellence - Black Voices.

Celebrating Black Excellence - Black Voices aims to centre and celebrate the Black members of our YRDSB community and share their voices. This Black History Month campaign asks students, staff and community members who identify as Black to consider submitting a short video of themselves answering one or more of the following prompts.

- I am proud to be Black because..
- It's important to me that I see my identity affirmed at school/work because...
- What I need at school/work is...
- People need to know that...
- I love myself because...
- I am magic because...
- Do you have a story to tell? Let us know what it is.
- If these prompts don't resonate with you, please feel free to answer a prompt or question of your own making.

These videos will be shared as Reels on the [@yrdsb.schools](#) Instagram account throughout the month of February and beyond, and may be featured on the Black Excellence webpage or in a YRDSB video.

How to submit:

- Submissions from staff and students can be made using the [submission form](#). (Students must use their GAPPs account)
- Submissions from students under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a signed consent form from a parent/guardian.

Autism Information Series Chinese

These two sessions will be delivered in Chinese to help parents, guardians and caregivers learn about Autism. In-person February 17 at Aldergrove PS and Virtual February 24. Please RSVP [here](#).

Guidance

IMPORTANT UPDATES

- **Course Selections** open on February 16 and are due by February 24th.
 - Using the pathway planner on myBlueprint, students can:
 - Indicate they are not returning to GWW for the next school year.
 - Opt out of the e-learning requirement (if students are in grade 9 or 10).
 - Express interest in taking a summer school course this year. Please note this is not registration - that will happen later this spring. If a student intends to take summer school, do not select that course for next year.
 - **Graduates of 2023** must complete and submit their volunteer hours by **Tuesday, May 23rd, 2023**.
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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 drgwilliamsss.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

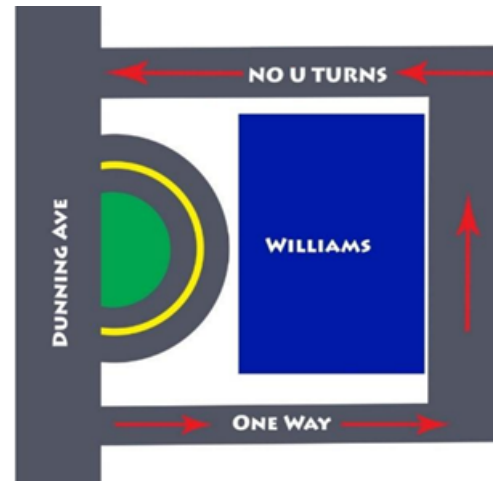
[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

Driveway and Parking Lot

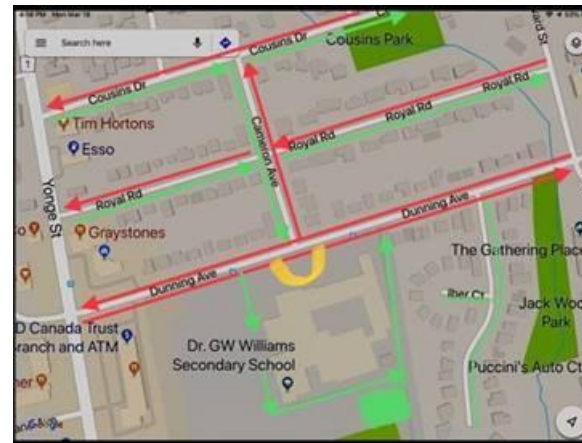
At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 2:50 to 3:10 pm. Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses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

- February 21 - [Agenda](#)
- April 17
- May 15