



Williams' Tell Weekly – Parent Edition

Week of: Dec 18 - 22, 2023

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
George Tsigaridis, VP (A-Le)
Andrew Gazaneo, VP (Li-Z)

Contact Us

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Aurora, Ontario
L4G 1A2
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Phone Extensions:

Reception 0
Attendance 1
Guidance 3
Staff Directory 4

Office Hours

7:45 am - 3:45 pm

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: drgwilliamsss.attendance@yrdsb.ca

This week:

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Monday, Dec 18 | Student Council Spirit Week ** School Wide Course Catch Up Day** Plushie Day |
| Tuesday, Dec 19 | Jersey Day & Holiday Market Boys Varsity Hockey at SARC, 1:15-4:30pm Girls Varsity Hockey Championships at Magna Centre, all day Senior Girls Volleyball vs. Multiple Teams at Williams |
| Wednesday, Dec 20 | Clone Day DECA\WAC Dodge Ball Buy-In (Periods 3 & 4-Lunch) Boys Basketball at St. Max, 3:30 (Double Header-Junior and Senior teams) |
| Thursday, Dec 21 | Battle of the Grades Grade 9 Yellow Grade 10 Red Grade 11 Green Grade 12 Blue Chess Tournament |
| Friday, Dec 22 | PJ Day Last Day of Classes |

Winter Break - Dec 23 - Jan 7

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Monday, Jan 8 | |
| Tuesday, Jan 9 | |
| Wednesday, Jan 10 | Senior Girls Volleyball vs. Multiple Teams |
| Thursday, Jan 11 | Course Selection assemblies Period 1 & 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Period 1 Grades 10 & 11 • Period 2 Grades 9 and 12 |
| Friday, Jan 12 | |

To support your family planning, the 2023-2024 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

We are back and able to communicate with the outside world again! Sorry for our delay in getting back to our regular communications. The program we use to disseminate mass emails only came back online last week. Thank you for your patience through this time.

As always it has been a very busy time here at Williams leading up to the break. Next week the student council has planned a variety of fun activities for students to engage in. Please encourage your students to get involved and show some school spirit each day!

Monday is a 'School-Wide Catch Up Day'. All classes will be in session but there will be no new material delivered and no assessments taking place. We wanted to have an early intervention point so that teachers could spend time checking in with all students and providing additional support where necessary. It is important for all students to take this opportunity to get caught up, work on summatives, prepare for exams, etc. so that everyone can head into the break and enjoy the time away from school.

Take care,
Melissa Schmidt

School Notices

Exams

The exam period for Semester 1 is January 25-31, 2024. Our exam schedule is almost finalized and will be distributed to students and staff as soon as possible.

YRDSB and Community Notices

Message from Our Trustee

I hope everyone has had a good start to the school year and is looking forward to the winter break ahead.

As I have been visiting schools and attending events, I continue to be impressed by the professionalism and dedication of school staff, the commitment and support of families and the curiosity, creativity and enthusiasm of students. As a Board of Trustees, we continue our commitment to delivering a high-quality education, this also includes striving to create safe, caring, inclusive and respectful school environments where students feel valued and supported.

I want to thank everyone who attended the school council forum held in our area and helped to make the event such a success. It was a wonderful opportunity to bring together school council members for an evening of shared learning and discussion. School councils play such an important role in our schools, and we are grateful for all that they do to support students, family engagement and schools.

While we are not yet at the midway point in the school year, many students and families are already looking to the school year ahead, visiting [secondary school open houses](#) and starting to think about [course selections](#) for next school year add a link to my pathway planner. All our secondary schools offer a variety of courses, programs and opportunities that let students gain skills and experience, explore their interests and begin preparing for the future. Those opportunities are now even easier to explore.

Students can [search from 16 different sectors](#) that interest them, including STEM, Arts, business, manufacturing and many more to discover how they can earn credits, gain experience, skills and certifications in those areas. Visit www2.yrdsb.ca/experience-yrdsb to learn more.

One of our roles as a Board of Trustees is to regularly review Board policies to ensure they are relevant, reflect our mission and values as an organization, and meet the needs of our students. An important part of that process is collecting feedback from the community. [Learn more on the Board website](#) about how you can share your input and see what policies are currently being reviewed.

I want to take this opportunity to thank families for their patience while we work to restore services following [network outages](#) as a result of a cyber incident, and to acknowledge the work of our staff who continued to deliver high quality public education and to restore services.

As we head into December, I also want to wish you a safe and enjoyable winter break. There are many significant dates for different faiths and cultures during this time of year, and to all those celebrating, I wish you a happy and joyous celebration. I hope everyone has an opportunity to relax, recharge and enjoy time with family and friends. We look forward to welcoming you back in [January](#).

Melanie Wright

Trustee, Aurora and Whitchurch-Stouffville

Do you need a computer?

Renewed Computer Technology (RCT) is a not-for-profit, charitable organization that empowers learners, educators and not-for-profit organizations with increased access to information and communications technology (ICT), skill development and learning opportunities, in a socially and environmentally responsible manner.

Working with York Region District School Board, they are offering affordable, renewed computer packages. Click [here](#) for more details.

Guidance

Post-Secondary Applications:

- **How to Apply to Ontario Universities** - Click [here](#). Applications open September 21, 2023 and close January 15, 2024.
- **How to Apply to an Ontario College as a Canadian Student** - Click [here](#). Applications open in October and close February 1, 2024.
- **How to Apply to an Ontario College as an International Student** - Click [here](#).
- **Apprenticeship Pathway** - See [OYAP](#) and [ApprenticeSearch](#) for more information and book an appointment with your guidance counsellor.
- **Workforce Planning Board of York Region** - See [here](#) for work opportunities and book an appointment with your guidance counsellor.

*Please see the Guidance Google Classroom for detailed information on important announcements.

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 2023-2024

- Please use this [link](#)

Website Resources for Families and Students

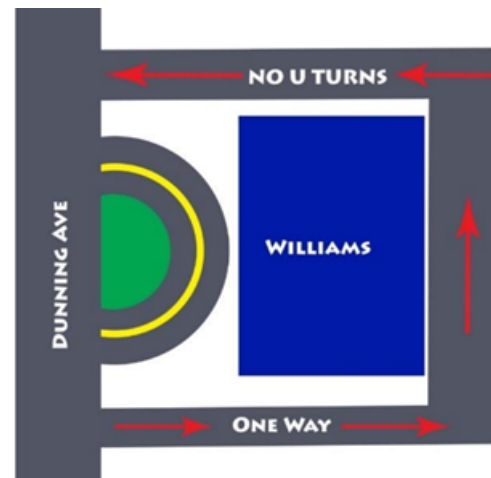
[Resources](#) for students and families on the YRDSB board website, including quick access to online tools, learning platforms and resources, community support, and translation tools.

Driveway and Parking Lot

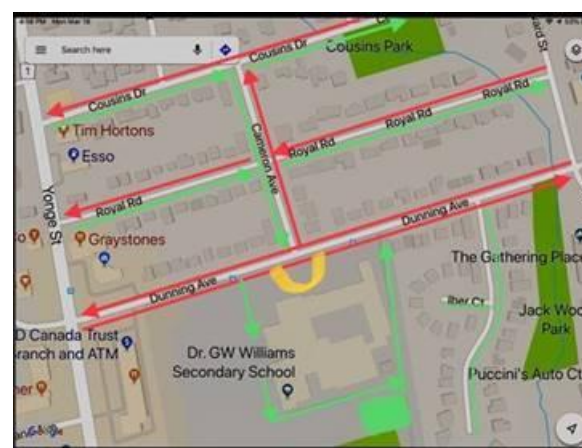
At the end of the school day, the front driveway loop is closed to regular traffic from about 2:50 to 3:10 pm. Only school taxis and buses are to use the front driveway loop at the end of the day in order to create a safe place for our students with special needs. Once all the school taxis and buses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

- Friday, September 22, 2023
- Friday, October 20, 2023
- Friday, November 17, 2023
- Friday, February 2, 2024
- Monday, May 6, 2024
- Thursday, June 27, 2024
- Friday, June 28, 2024

School Council Meetings for 2023-2024

- Monday October 16, 2023
- Monday November 20, 2023
- Wednesday February 21, 2024
- Monday April 15, 2024
- Tuesday May 21, 2024

