

# *L'école Elder's Mills*

## *La Voix des Aigles*



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*School Priorities: Well-being and Mental Health, Modern Learning, Math*

**Principal: Rosanna Totino**  
**Vice Principal: Julia Waiser**

**Superintendent: Daniel Wu**  
**Trustee: Nadeem Mahmood**

*December 2019/January 2020*

### *Administrators' Message*

Dear Parents and Guardians,

Our Winter Fest evening on November 21<sup>st</sup> was a huge success and we thank School Council and parent volunteers who supported with planning and organization. We now contemplate the planning of holiday festivities with family and friends. We have experienced much success so far this year, both academically and in student involvement in extracurricular activities voluntarily provided by many of our teachers. We have sent out Progress Reports and students and teachers continue to put forth their best efforts toward the First Term Reports.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our families who attended the parent-teacher interviews in November. We certainly appreciated having you come to the school to have those important discussions with teachers about your child's progress to date.

Much of what we celebrate is due to the efforts and contributions of our students, teaching and support staff and parents. We are also fortunate, as a school, to have remarkable volunteers and a School Council who give of themselves to further the learning and positive educational experiences of all our students.

As we reflect upon the learning so far this year, and as we look forward to a New Year full of promise, we would like to take this opportunity to wish all of you much joy and peace as you spend time with loved ones, enjoying this season of celebration!

*Mme Totino & Mme Waiser*



### *Important Dates*

- December 12 - Winter Concert, Gym, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- December 23 - January 3: Winter Break
- January 16 - Grade One French Immersion Information Night, 7 p.m. at Lorna Jackson Public School
- January 17 - P.A. Day – No school
- January 31 - P.A. Day – No school
- February 4 - School Council Meeting, 7 p.m., Library
- February 6 - Lice Check (Please contact school office if you do not wish your child to participate.)

### *Reporting student absences*

Parents are able to inform the school office of their child's absence in three different ways. Absences can be entered into Edsby which is available 24 hours/day, 7 days a week. Future absences can be reported at any time by sending an email to the school attendance email address at: [elders.mills.ps.attendance@yrdsb.ca](mailto:elders.mills.ps.attendance@yrdsb.ca) or parents may choose to contact the school office between 8:30 a.m. and 9:00 a.m. on the day of absence.

## Message from Our Trustee

One of our top priorities as a school board is creating an environment that enables our students to focus on learning and be successful. That means creating environments where students are safe and feel safe, where all of our students know that they are welcome and supported, and where they see their identities reflected, valued and celebrated.

### Championing Equity and Inclusivity

Championing Equity and Inclusivity is one of the priorities outlined in the [Board of Trustees' Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#). We are fortunate to live in one of the most diverse regions of Canada, and welcome students, staff and families with a broad range of identities and experiences. There has been much work underway at the Board in the past few months to ensure we are providing all of our students with a safe, equitable and inclusive learning environment, including:

Providing [Board-wide training](#) for over 12,000 school staff on anti-Black racism.

- Bringing together over 250 students and staff at our annual [SpeakOut conference](#) for the 2SLGBTQ+ community.
- Acknowledging [Treaties Recognition Week](#), and learning about the importance of treaties and treaty relationships in Canada from First Nations community members.
- Hosting a labour market information night for parents to learn about current and future career opportunities and employment trends.
- Bringing together hundreds of members of the education community for three days of learning focused on Indigenous Education and Equity at our world-renowned [Quest conference](#).

This is in addition to the ongoing work taking place in our schools. It is also important that our families know and feel that they are a valued, respected and important part of our school community. We recently held regional school council forums that brought together school council members from across the region to learn and share together on important topics such as engaging families, vaping and more. It was wonderful to see so many family members there.

The Board of Trustees was also pleased to receive and commit to taking action on the recommendations in response to the Anti-Black Racism, Antisemitism, Classism and Islamophobia community consultations.

### Winter Months

With the winter weather already upon us, I also want to remind families that school transportation may be cancelled on [extreme cold or inclement weather days](#), and there may be rare occasions when emergency weather conditions result in school closures. To ensure families are aware, last month, we tested a new system to send text messages to families in emergency situations only. Information about transportation cancellations and school closures will also be available on Board and school websites, Board social media channels and local media.

Many of our students and families will be celebrating days of significance and holidays in the coming weeks and months, and I wish you all the very best for the season. I hope everyone has a safe and happy winter break and we look forward to welcoming students back in January.

Nadeem Mahmood  
Trustee, Vaughan, Wards 1 and 2



This month, our Eagles Volleyball teams had the opportunity to participate in their respective area tournaments. Both teams dedicated their time to train between September to November. They were able to refine their skills and represent our school. The intermediate girls won two games out of four games in the preliminary round giving them a third place finish. The boys demonstrated perseverance and were able to win three games in their preliminary round advancing them to the area finals. They went on to place third overall in our area. We are very proud of all the players! Go Eagles Go!

## Celebrating Diversity



### CHRISTIANITY

- December 1 **First Sunday of Advent** begins the period of preparation for Christmas. In homes and churches, Christians set out special candle holders or Advent wreaths (Western).
- December 25 ♦ **Christmas** (Western calendar) celebrates the birth of Jesus about 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God, and accept him as their Saviour and Lord. In many families, Christmas Eve is celebrated with big dinners, visiting and carol-singing, often followed by midnight church services.

### ISLAM

- December 13 **Birthday of Aga Khan (Ismaili)** December 13 marks the birthday of His Highness Prince Karim Aga Khan, the 49th hereditary Imam-of-the-Time descended from the progeny of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh). It is referred to as Salgirah Khushiali and is a celebratory occasion for Ismaili Muslims to express love, loyalty and devotion to their Imam.

### JAINISM

- December 8 **Maun Agiyaras** is a day of fasting, silence and meditation.

### JUDAISM

- Dec. 23 - 30 **Chanukah** (Festival of Lights) celebrates religious freedom by commemorating the victory of the Jews over Antiochus who tried to outlaw the practice of Judaism. Starting on the evening of December 12, candles are lit in increasing numbers for eight nights in a "Chanukah" which is a special candelabrum containing nine candles.

### KWANZAA

- Dec. 26 - Jan. 1 **Kwanzaa** named after the Swahili word for "first fruits" is a seven day cultural celebration initiated by African Americans starting on December 26th. Each day a candle is lit and placed in a seven-cup candelabrum called a kinara that sits on a straw mat adorned with fruit and vegetables. The participants discuss the principles or Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. On the final night of the celebration, friends and relatives gather for a feast known as Karamu.

### WICCA

- December 22 **Yule** In most traditions, Yule is the Sabbat that begins the Wiccan Year. This is the Winter Solstice—the shortest day and longest night we will experience in the Northern Hemisphere

### ZOROASTRIANISM

- December 26 **Death of Prophet Zarathushtra** who was the founder of the Zoroastrian faith. His dates are uncertain but Westerners believe he lived in the first or the second millennium B.C.E.

## BUDDHISM

- January 1 **Temple / Bodhi Day** has become a day for Canadian Buddhists to attend a special service in the local temple.
- January 25 ♦ **Lunar New Year** the day after the new moon, marks the beginning of the new lunar year. It is the year of the Pig. Irrespective of their religion or country, all Chinese, Vietnamese and many Koreans celebrate the cultural aspect of this day. This is the beginning of year 4717 in the Chinese calendar. It is a time for renewal and personal relationships, and pledges of prosperity.

## CHRISTIANITY

- January 6 **Epiphany (Western Calendar)** is the 12th day of Christmas and the end of the Christmas season. It comes from a Greek word referring to the baptism of Jesus and the arrival in Bethlehem of the Three Wise Men who came to worship Jesus. The Armenian Orthodox Church celebrates the nativity of Jesus on this day.
- January 7 ♦ **Christmas (Eastern Calendar)**. Some Orthodox churches celebrate the birth of Jesus on this day. The Julian (Eastern) calendar is currently 13 days behind the Gregorian (Western) calendar. In York Region, this is often referred to as "Ukrainian Christmas".
- January 20 **Epiphany (Eastern Calendar)**. The Eastern Church associates the date with the baptism of Jesus by John and the miracle of Cana in which Jesus turned water into wine. This day is also known as Theophany in Orthodox churches.

## HINDUISM

- January 14 **Makar Sankranti / Pongal**, is also known as Lohri, Thai Pongal and Til Sankranti. It marks the winter solstice and is primarily a rice harvest festival.
- January 29 **Vasant Panchami** is particularly celebrated in Northern India. This festival marks the advent of spring. Also known as Shri Panchami, it is a celebration commonly associated with Shri or Lakshmi (Goddess of Wealth). It is also commonly linked with the Goddess of Learning, Saraswati

## SIKHISM

- January 5 **Birthday of Guru Gobind Singh Ji**. The tenth guru (1666-1708 C.E.) was the final master who created the Sikh Brotherhood, the Khalsa.
- January 13 **Maghi** commemorates the forgiveness shown by Guru Gobind Singh to forty deserters who returned to fight the Mughal army and sacrificed their lives under the leadership of a brave Khalsa woman named Mae Bhaago.

## *Winter Weather*

With winter weather already here, we want to share a few important reminders.

### Dress for the weather

Students should come dressed appropriately for the weather and for outdoor play. Students can stay warm by wearing layers of loose-fitting clothing, a hat, scarf, jackets, snow pants and mittens or gloves. Students may also want to bring extra pants and socks in case they get wet.

### Recess

If students are well enough to come to school, they are expected to go outside for recess. Our students benefit from spending time outside and being active. We monitor weather conditions throughout the day. If there are extreme weather conditions, we may consider a shortened or indoor recess.

### Bus or School Cancellations

When an **extreme cold** or **inclement weather** day is declared, school transportation (including buses and taxis) is cancelled in the morning and afternoon. Schools will remain open. Please notify the school if your child will not be attending school on those days. Students will not be penalized for missing school on these days.

There may be rare instances when **emergency weather events** occur and we need to close all schools and Board locations. Please take the time to make plans in the event of an emergency school closure. Information about transportation cancellations and Board closures will be shared through local media, [Board](#) and school website and on [twitter @YRDSB](#).

## *EMPS Wins 1st Prize at the York Tree Bee 2019!*

Congratulations to our team of students for finishing in 1st Place for the York Region Tree Bee Championship 2019! Students tested their skills in tree identification and forest stewardship against other schools across York Region. We would like to thank all of the students for their hard work and commitment as well as all of the families for supporting this amazing community event. All participants and visitors were also treated to a special wildlife presentation showcasing the importance of environmental stewardship. Lastly, we would like to thank our Eco teachers Mme Bonofiglio, Mme Mahmoudi and M. Kouri for preparing the students and escorting them to the evening event. We are looking forward to seeing many returning students and new participants at next year's event and we hope that you continue to be inspired by nature!



## *Le Festival du Livre*

The Festival du Livre, our French Scholastic Book Fair was a great success! Thank you to all the families who made purchases. Students love to come to the library and shop on their own as well. All purchases benefit the school, as Scholastic provides a portion of each purchase from their Book Fairs as credits so that we can purchase resources for the library and the classrooms. Thank you! Merci!

### *Author Visit for grade 4 to 8 students: Alessia Dickson, The Crystal Chronicles*

On November 26, all grade 4 to 8 students had the opportunity to meet Alessia Dickson as she gave an engaging and inspiring presentation about how she started writing her first book and planned out her series of books, when she was in grade 5. Many students were inspired by her presentation, and we have a number of aspiring writers at EMPS!

### *Grade 1 French Immersion Information Sessions and Registrations*

#### **Information Sessions**

Information sessions for Grade 1 entry into the French Immersion (FI) program will take place at French Immersion schools that have a Grade 1 program on January 16, 2020 at 7 p.m.

Please visit YRDSB's website in January 2020 <http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/fi/Pages/Program-Locations.aspx> to find the FI program location for your elementary school location.

#### **Registration**

FI registration will begin on January 17, 2020. Parents or guardians of Senior Kindergarten students entering Grade 1 in 2020, and wishing to enrol in the FI Program, can visit or call their home school office and request an *Office Index Card - short version*. This Office Index Card must be signed by the principal of the home school. Parents or guardians then take this form, along with one piece of identification showing their address to the designated FI program location to register, between January 17 and February 7, 2020. Registration during this period is not first come, first served.

#### **Late Registrations**

Late registrations are those submitted after February 7, 2020. Late registrations will be treated on a first- come, first- served basis and will be considered subsequent to registrations received during the registration period should overflow be necessary.

#### **Accommodation Plan**

YRDSB's FI Accommodation Plan provides long-term consistency and equity of access to all students in York Region and will enable YRDSB to continue to offer the FI program to all who wish to enrol. The FI program will be offered in Dual Track or Single Track settings, in a variety of configurations. In order to meet community needs and optimize available space in our schools, a community's Grade 1-8 FI program may be provided over more than one school during the course of a student's FI education. Space requirements at some schools may mean that siblings are in different schools for primary dual track French Immersion programs due to differing grade structures. Like any of our schools across the Board, changes to school boundaries, and/or the accommodation model for the French Immersion program may need to be considered when new schools open, a school experiences enrolment growth, and program changes occur. This will allow flexibility in addressing community needs and the opportunity to use existing space in schools. More information is available on the Board's website: [www.yrdsb.ca](http://www.yrdsb.ca). Please note: Some of the FI accommodation plans will require facility modifications or the development of new schools and will require short-term transition plans that might include overflow while we work toward the long-term vision. Overflow refers to situations in which the Board directs students to attend a school other than their community school or optional program for a specific period of time, as defined in Policy #108.

## December/January Music Newsletter



Ukuleles are in full strum for our **Grade 4's and 5's**. The Grade 4's have learned several 3 chord nursery rhyme songs and will be writing their own short songs at the end of the term. The Grade 5's have been learning to read music and playing original melodies on their ukuleles.

**Grade 6's** are becoming more familiar with their band instruments after their first recorded test. They will be continuing to learn new notes and techniques for improving their sound.

**Grade 7's and 8's** also finished their first performance test on some popular tunes. They will be adding more songs to their repertoire as well as developing their internal pulse and rhythm.

### **Winter Concert - December 12th**

A Festive Winter Concert is coming to Elder's Mills P.S. on December 12th. The Concert will run from 6:30pm - 8pm. There will be snacks/drinks/raffle prizes for sale beginning at 6pm.

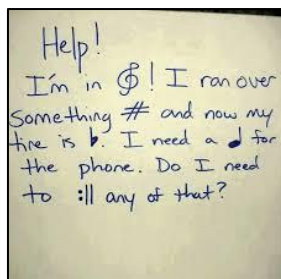
Tickets are \$5 each and can be purchased on School Cash online. All proceeds go to the Music Department for new instruments!

Performances from: Junior and Senior Concert Band, The EMPS Choir, Jazzy8's and many other small ensembles!

### **Quote of the Month**

**Music gives a soul  
to the universe, wings  
to the mind, flight  
to the imagination, and  
life to everything.**  
-Plato

### **Joke of the Month:**



### **Thank You for your Support**

Elder's Mills P.S. has just purchased a new instrument with the funds raised from last year's Spring Concert. A Yamaha Bass Clarinet was added to the inventory earlier in November, and has given the Concert Band a much needed boost of bass to their sound! Thank you to all the students and parents for supporting the Music Department at Elder's Mills P.S.

### **Junior Concert Band**

This ensemble continues to rehearse once a week on Day 5 at lunch recess. They have been working hard preparing 3 songs that will be ready to perform at the Winter Concert.

### **Senior Concert Band**

This group of musicians rehearses once a week on Day 2 and have been working hard on 4 different pieces. Three songs will be performed at the Winter Concert as well. This ensemble has already begun preparing for their performance at Music Alive.

### **Small Ensembles**

The Jazzy 8's tested their endurance at WinterFest, performing their entire setlist, lasting over an hour! Well done 8's! They are currently working on 2 new selections for the Winter Concert. There are several other small bands forming around the EMPS music department. Most are nameless at this moment, but they will be making appearances at the upcoming concert!

### **Musician of the Month**

The musician of the month award is given to one student in Senior Band and one student in Junior Band. Students in the band nominate a fellow band member whom they believe has shown exceptional musicianship throughout the month. There is a new winner each month. For the Senior Band, the November winner is **Natalie F.**, for always being prepared, enthusiastic, and making sure the low brass section has pencils. Congratulations! The Junior Band winner will be announced at the Winter Concert!



*From all the staff at Elder's Mills,  
we wish you a safe and restful  
Winter Break!*