



Markham Gateway P.S.

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Home of the Titans



PRINCIPAL

PAUL BATTLER

**SUPERINTENDENT
OF SCHOOLS**

CAMILLE LOGAN

SCHOOL TRUSTEE

JUANITA NATHAN

**Last day of
school -**

June 26

**MGPS office
re-opens -
August 31**

**First day of
classes—**

September 8

Courtesy

Cooperation

Consideration

Commitment

Message from the Administration

Please visit [Google Translate](https://www.google.com/translate) to translate the contents of this message.

On behalf of the staff at Markham Gateway P.S., we hope that everyone continues to stay healthy and well during the on-going school closure.

Addressing Anti-Black Racism

We are heartbroken at the ongoing anti-Black racism happening in Canada and the United States. Our students, families and staff have been deeply affected by the murder of George Floyd, the protests in response, and other incidents of anti-Black racism. No group has been more deeply affected than the Black community. Board Director Louise Sirisko has provided messaging that reinforces the board's commitment to taking an active stand against anti-black racism and all forms of hate and oppression. You can see some of Ms. Sirisko's responses by clicking [here](#).

These protests are the result of the ongoing, traumatic and systemic anti-Black racism in our society. Anti-Black racism exists in our country, communities and schools. Recent media attention has spotlighted how institutional systems, including schools, create systemic racism and support discrimination, trauma and harm against the Black community. As a school and community, it is critical that we actively address instances of anti-Black racism in ways that are informed, reflective and incorporate lived experiences. We stand together in this commitment and must all embrace making a continuous effort to act against anti-Black racism. One part of this includes accessing resources, such as the ones listed below, to research, reflect, learn and incorporate into conversations about anti-Black racism, with others and ourselves.

Please click [here](#) to find some supports for you and your family, as well as some educational links to support discussions as a family.

[Anti-Racism For Kids 101: Starting To Talk About Race](#)

[100 Race-Conscious things you can say to your child to advance racial justice](#)

[Article on Raising Race-Conscious Children](#)

[4 Things We Should All Teach Kids About Racism Right Now](#)

If you have any concerns about your child's emotional well-being, please do not hesitate to contact the school as we can help arrange for the appropriate supports to be put in place.

Results of the Family Wellness Check-In Survey

The transition to online classes has been a huge learning curve for both staff and students, but with admirable perseverance, teamwork and a growth mindset, we have settled into a positive rhythm. Over the past few weeks, we have been focusing on expanding our real-time (also known as synchronous) learning opportunities. I hope you have seen an increase in opportunities for your children to connect with their teachers and other staff members in different ways, such as Google meets, phone calls, working on assignments online and getting direction or feedback, conversations during office hours, video-taped lessons or messages, etc. I thank you for your patience as we transition from an asynchronous approach, as first directed by the Board, to the more synchronous approach. Learning how to use the technology and online platforms has highlighted once again how critical the relationship is between parents/guardians, students and the school. We are very grateful for all the support from parents, guardians, grandparents, siblings and extended family members as we transitioned to this new way of learning.

More than 90 families responded to the Family Wellness Check-In Survey that was recently conducted. We thank the families who were able to complete the survey as it provided us with some valuable feedback that we will now address and act on.

The MGPS staff had an opportunity to review and analyze the results of the survey. Some of the themes or topics that emerged include:

- Lack of technology in some homes was presenting a barrier to student learning
- Many students are regularly accessing the online classroom 3 to 4 days a week, if not every day
- The amount of work being assigned was about right, but too much in some cases depending on the age of the students
- Many families indicated that they would appreciate receiving strategies for supporting student learning at home
- Some families indicated there were challenges keeping their children engaged in the online learning
- There were many appreciative comments about the efforts teachers and school staff have made with their children and there were requests or suggestions to increase the number of synchronous opportunities for their children to connect directly with their teachers

In response to this information and feedback, we have taken, and are taking, a number of actions. Some of the next steps are as follows:

- We sent an email to the community asking for families to email the school at mark-ham.gateway.ps@yrdsb.ca if they were finding a lack of technology in the home was a barrier to student learning. Families are still encouraged to let us know if they would like additional technology (e.g. Chromebooks) to support their children's learning at home. We will arrange to get those technologies out.
- We directly contacted all families who indicated they would like a call from the school.
- As referenced above, staff have been providing more synchronous learning opportunities for their students and will continue to do so moving forward. They have also been looking at different ways to design learning experiences that are meaningful and engaging for students. It is our hope that these approaches will lead to greater student engagement.
- To respond to some of the questions related to technology, the Board has put together a list of resources and links on the website which you can access [here](#).
- You will find later in this newsletter strategies and linked resources that will hopefully help with supporting student learning at home

Thank you again for your input. The results of the survey have helped guide staff discussions and ensures we are being as accountable as possible to your feedback.

Thank you for your on-going support and partnership. I know that the school closure is a challenging situation for everyone, particularly our students, and I greatly appreciate all that you are doing to support your child's learning and well-being during this time.

P. Battler (on behalf of the MPGS Staff)

Message from Our Trustee



Dear families,

I hope that you and your loved ones are keeping well and are healthy. The past few months have been full of change and uncertainty as we respond to the global pandemic and try to reduce the spread of COVID-19. As a Board of Trustees, we know that our families have experienced this pandemic and the school closures in different ways, and we want you to know that our thoughts have been with you all.

Our school board moved quickly to introduce our [Learning and Caring Plan](#) through an intentionally phased approach. Our plan focused on both supporting student well-being and providing continuation of learning for more than 127,000 students. A plan was developed that respected each family's unique situations and focused on maintaining a caring, safe and inclusive learning environment. To support this, over 20,000 pieces of technology were distributed to ensure that all of our students could access the learning opportunities available to them, and resources and plans were put in place to support all of our learners, including students with special education needs and English language learners.

More information about the Learning and Caring plan as well as tips, resources and supports for students and families to support well-being and online learning can be found at www.yrdsb.ca/covid19.

We are all part of a larger community and I am inspired to see the many different ways schools, families and students maintained their connections with one another. It was also moving to see the many inspiring ways our school board, students, staff and families acknowledged our frontline workers and made contributions to the fight against COVID-19. As a school board, for example, we [donated over 145,000 pieces of personal protective equipment](#), including gloves, masks and more.

Each and every one of us has made a difference - in staying home as much as possible and following [public health guidelines](#). I know that this has meant making sacrifices.

To our graduating class of 2020, I know this is not the graduating year you had hoped for. I appreciate that the school closures will not affect your ability to graduate, however this unique situation and the need to postpone graduations has been disappointing. I remain tremendously proud of all of our graduates and look forward to celebrating this important milestone with you as soon as we are able to reschedule the graduation ceremonies.

In addition, I know that you have missed out on field trips, awards events, athletic banquets, spirit days, assemblies, our annual [Celebrating Student Success awards](#) and the many other ways we extend learning, connect as a community and celebrate the achievements of our students.

We have also been unable to gather together as we normally would in our schools and communities to celebrate or recognize important dates, including Sikh Heritage Month, Pesach, Good Friday, Easter (Western), Vaisakhi, Holy Friday, Orthodox Easter (Eastern), Ridvan, Jewish Heritage Month, Asian/South Asian Heritage Month, Ramadan, Pride, National Indigenous History Month, Italian Heritage Month and Portuguese Heritage Month. As a Board, these dates of significance are important for us to acknowledge and we will continue to celebrate and value the wealth of diversity in our community.

As the school year comes to a close, I want to wish you and your families a safe, healthy and happy summer. I look forward to a time when we can welcome your children back into our schools again. We know that families have questions about what the return to school will look like. We will continue to share information with you as it becomes available. In the meantime, we encourage you to continue following public health guidelines and to stay connected.

A [message from the Chair of the Board of Trustees](#) is also available on the Board website at www.yrdsb.ca.

Juanita Nathan

Trustee, Markham, Wards 7 and 8

MOVING? CHANGE OF ADDRESS?

Are you moving before September, or have you recently moved? Families who are planning to move before the start of the next school year are asked to please contact the school office through email (markham.gateway.ps@yrdsb.ca) as soon as possible. Families in York Region are eligible to attend specific schools based on their residential address. School staff can help you locate your child's new school and also can assist you with the student transfer process. In addition to helping make your child's transition to a new school a smooth and hassle-free process, by informing the school of your plans to move, you are helping us ensure that our school is organized for September with the most up-to-date information. Thank you for your cooperation!



Contacting the School and School Staff

Please remember that all school buildings are closed to students and staff alike and as a result phone extensions in the school are not being monitored on a regular basis. Families can still contact the school by email at markham.gateway.ps@yrdsb.ca or call at 905-472-3303 and leave a message.

Kindergarten Registration is Still Happening

Even though school buildings are closed for right now, Kindergarten registration for the 2020-21 school year is still happening at [Kindergarten ONLINE](#).

Children who turn four or five years old during 2020, live within the school boundary and whose parents are public school tax supporters will be eligible to register for kindergarten. For more information visit the YRDSB website: www.yrdsb.ca

After you register, you will be contacted to come to the office with the following documents once the school closures end.

Documents that are required for registration are as follows:

Proof of child's age - Birth Certificate, if born in Canada.

- Passport, Permanent Resident Card of the child and parents if child is born outside of Canada.

Proof of Residency : If you own:

- ♦ Purchase Agreement
- ♦ Town of Markham Tax Bill/Utility Bill

If you rent:

- ♦ Landlord/Tenant Lease Agreement
- ♦ Bank statement/Utility Bill



Applications cannot be accepted without these documents . For further information please call the school.

***** **Please note that hand written letters will not be accepted*******

7 STEPS TO GOOD DIGITAL PARENTING



1) TALK WITH YOUR KIDS

- Stay calm
- Talk early and often
- Be open and direct



2) EDUCATE YOURSELF

- Search online for anything you don't understand
- Try out the apps, games, and sites yourself
- Explore the GDP tips and resources



3) USE PARENTAL CONTROLS

- Activate the safety settings in your operating system, search engine, and games
- Use the parental controls on your children's phones, tablets, and game consoles
- Monitor your kids' use and their screen time



4) SET GROUND RULES AND APPLY SANCTIONS

- Agree and sign a family safety contract
- Set time and place limits for their tech use
- Enforce sanctions when necessary



5) FRIEND AND FOLLOW BUT DON'T STALK

- Friend your kids on social media
- Respect their online space and don't over do it
- Encourage your kids to create a good digital reputation



6) EXPLORE, SHARE, AND CELEBRATE

- Go online with your kids and explore their online world
- Take advantage of new ways of communicating
- Learn from them and have fun



7) BE A GOOD DIGITAL ROLE MODEL

- Curb your own bad digital habits
- Know when to unplug
- Show your kids how to collaborate and create online

