



The PRIME

June, 2018

Volume 6, Issue 8

Kathy Lott
Principal

Tara Wagg
Vice Principal

Debbie Wong
Office Administrative
Assistant

Mary-Lena Gruppuso
Secretary

Rose Ferruzzo
Secretary

Peter Tse
Superintendent
of Schools
905.940.7800

Billy Pang
Trustee
647.461.9965

SCHOOL DAY TIMES

For all Students JK-8

7:50-8:05 a.m.
Yard Supervision

7:55 a.m.
Entry Bell

8:05-9:45 a.m.
Learning Block-1

9:45-10:15 a.m.
Recess

10:15-11:55 a.m.
Learning Block-2

11:55 a.m.-12:55 p.m.
Lunch (all students
outside from 11:55 a.m.-
12:30 p.m.)

12:55-2:35 p.m.
Learning Block-3

2:35 p.m.
Dismissal

Sir John A. Macdonald Public School
45 Murison Drive, Markham, ON, L6C 0J4
t. 905.888.5777 f. 905.927.2082
www: <http://sirjohnamacdonald.ps.yrdsb.ca/>
email: sir.john.a.macdonald@yrdsb.ca
twitter: @sjamps



Principal's Message

June is here! A time to look forward, celebrate the moment and look back. Looking forward is a chance for all of us to build on what we have learned and explore exciting new possibilities. Celebrating the moment – a step taken or a goal achieved – gives us all a chance to feel a sense of pride and accomplishment. Looking back gives us a chance to review and reflect on what we have learned. Please take some time to reflect with your child(ren) during the month of June.

Looking forward, please consider becoming a member of our School Council to help further along the growth and development of our school programs and opportunities for all. Each fall, School Council elections take place and we will be looking for nominations for our Council Executive positions at our fall Curriculum Night – tentatively scheduled for Thursday, September 20th, 2018. Our first School Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 25th – and this is the date for Council Elections as well. Please be sure to check in the SJAM School Start Up Package in the fall to express your interest.

Celebrating the moment - Our staff are continually learning and growing together to engage our students in authentic learning opportunities both inside and outside of the classroom. As partners in education, together we have supported many children in helping to achieve their goals. As well, our SJAM staff has been able to provide many varied and rich learning opportunities for our students through the arts, athletics and academics this school year.

Looking back, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the parents in our **community who drop in to talk with us about your child's growth and development** and their education at SJAM. Feel free to come by the office at any time to talk about your concerns and suggestions for improvement – or any questions you may have about our school programs and supports available. We value creativity, innovation and collaboration to create an engaged school community. We truly look forward to our continued journey together.

Partners in Education,

Kathy Lott
Principal

Tara Wagg
Vice-Principal



Q. What class will my child be in next school year?

A. All SJAM students will find out on Wednesday, June 27th, 2018

Thanks to all parents who provided feedback to us for consideration as our staff place all children in what we believe to be the best learning environment for them next year.

We are currently working through class placements for all students returning to SJAM next year and the process will soon be finalized.

Final Report Cards are sent home with all students on Wednesday, June 27th. On the same day, all children will learn what class they will join for September 2018 – as shared by their current homeroom teacher. Our staff have **planned a transition activity for all students returning to SJAM allowing students to move to their next year's homeroom class to meet their next year's homeroom teacher.** We believe allowing our students to know what class they will be in for September is a positive move for student well-being. We ask that you trust our school team as professionals that we take all students needs and interests into careful consideration as we begin to build our classroom communities for next school year.

The goals of this transition experience for all students -

- **to allow the next year's homeroom teacher to meet their new class**
- to ease anxiety of our students over the summer months not knowing who is in their class or who their homeroom teacher is
- for students to begin to feel a sense of belonging with their new homeroom family

As always, these class placements are TENTATIVE and may change in late September based on moves in and moves out of our SJAM area this summer.

Please do feel free to call our school office if you have any questions or concerns with this new SJAM transition process.

NOTE: Students moving on to Victoria Square Public School or Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School will also be involved in a transition activity with their peer group led by a few of our SJAM staff members.

2017-2018
Professional
Activity &
Training Days
(No School for
Students)

Monday, June 4, 2018

Thursday, June 28, 2018
11:05 a.m. DISMISSAL
FOR ALL STUDENTS

Friday, June 29, 2018

A Message from York Regional Police

IT'S TIME TO REMIND CHILDREN ABOUT BEING SAFE IN OUR COMMUNITY

It's a good time for parents to remind children about personal safety.

Here's what children need to know:

- Their name, age, telephone number, address, city and province. This can be done through rhyme or song.
- How to contact their parents at any time, by memorizing cell or work numbers.
- How and under what circumstances to call 911.
- To never approach or enter a stranger's vehicle. A responsible adult would never ask a child for directions or any other question for that matter.
- Make sure they know they have a right to say "no" to an adult, especially when the adult is asking them to do something they have been taught is wrong or feels uncomfortable. Reminding children of this right is important because children are taught from a young age to respect adults.
- To always tell parents where they will be and to never enter someone's home without their parent's permission.
- If home alone, never admit it when answering the phone. Never answer a knock at the door or speak through it. Adults can be very persuasive. Teach your child to call you if there is a knock at the door and if they fear for their safety, teach them to call 911. Make sure they know that police officers are there to help them and would not get mad if it were a false alarm.
- If they think they are being followed or are in danger they should run home or to a public place. If someone grabs them, they should try to get away, yelling and screaming while doing so.

It is important to play in safe areas, never take shortcuts and stick with a buddy whenever possible.

It is never too early or too late to teach children the importance of personal safety. Common sense, communication and consistency are the keys. Remind children to alert a responsible adult if something strange happens that makes them feel uncomfortable. Remember, crime prevention is everyone's responsibility.

For more information on this subject, visit www.yrp.ca.

LAST DAY OF SCHOOL IS THURSDAY, JUNE 28th

11:05 a.m. DISMISSAL FOR ALL STUDENTS

All schools in the York Region District School Board are committed to improving student achievement and well-being. On Thursday, June 28 2018 an early release day will take place to allow elementary teachers and support staff to take part in meetings during the afternoon of that day. These meetings will allow for school staff to engage in **culminating activities regarding the review and revision of the School's Improvement Plan as well as year-end** and transition activities that support student success. As has been our practice over the past four years, students will attend school during the morning of Thursday, June 28, 2018 only. All SJAM Students will be dismissed early that day at 11:05 a.m. Arrangements will be made to ensure that students who are normally bussed to and from school will receive transportation at this time. Parents/guardians whose children attend after school child care should make appropriate arrangements to address this change in schedule.

Kindergarten Registration Continues

Kindergarten registration for the 2018-19 school year is ongoing. Registration forms are available on YRDSB's website: www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca. Children who turn four or five years old during 2018, live within the school boundary and whose parents are public school tax supporters will be eligible to register for kindergarten. For more information during July and August please visit the YRDSB website or contact Community Education Centre East, at 905-940-7800.

Grade 8 Graduation

REMINDER:

Grade 8 Graduation will be taking place on Monday June 18th, 2018 at the Courtyard by Marriott located at 7095 Woodbine Avenue from 6-10:30pm.

Victoria Square P.S.



Stay up-to-date on news from Victoria Square Public School by following VSPS on Twitter! Information on before and after care provider is on the feed!



Victoria Square PS

@VictoriaSq_PS

We are a Dual Track French Immersion School (Grades 1-2) and English Grades JK-8

📍 50 Prince of Wales Drive Markham, Ontario L6C 0K2

📅 Joined February 2018

[Tweet to Victoria Square PS](#)

Lost & Found

All clothing from the lost and found box will be on display in the main foyer from Monday June 11th until Thursday June 21st.

Please pop by the school between 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. to look for lost items.

All items remaining at this time will be donated to charity.

First Day Procedures for September 2018

All Senior Kindergarten to Grade 8 students will attend school for a full day on Tuesday, September 4th. Junior Kindergarten students only attend school for 100-minutes on the first day in September. **NEW JK students will be invited to attend for the 100 minute middle block of our day (10:15 AM - 11:55 AM only).**

Regular bussing schedules will apply, and families are strongly encouraged to send their children on their regular school bus in the morning. Staff supervisors are always on duty to supervise students as they arrive on school buses and they will supervise them as they move from the buses to the school yard.

If you do drive your child to/from school, drop off and pick up must occur in the rear yard, located on the South side of the school. Students are not permitted to use the front doors of the school for entry and exit. Staff will be in the yard area to assist families as they arrive on the first day.

Students will not know who their specific teacher is until they arrive on the first day of school in September. As students and families arrive at school, staff members wearing orange vests will be in front of the school and in the yard to help direct families. Children will be directed by staff members to areas in the yard where they will be organized by grade level. Once organized by grade, the students will be divided into their assigned classes and will meet their specific teachers. If rain requires us to move indoors to get organized then staff outside will direct families into the school through specific doors. **PARENTS WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO ENTER THE SCHOOL TO VISIT CLASSROOMS.**

If your child does not attend school on Tuesday, September 4th we will contact you to confirm your plans to attend school.

Student Busing Eligibility Changes As Students Get Older

Did you know that students' busing eligibility changes throughout their school career? Your son/daughter's eligibility to ride the school bus may change according to their grade and distance from home to school. Below are the provisions for eligibility identified in the Board's Transportation Policy #680:

- All YRDSB students in Grades JK-3 who live within 1.2 km of their school are not eligible for transportation
- All YRDSB students in Grades 4-8 who live within 1.6 km of their school are not eligible for transportation
- All YRDSB students in Grades 9-12 who live within a transit served area are not eligible for transportation.

To view Board Policy #680 Student Transportation, please visit www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca. For more information about bus transportation and to determine your son/daughter's eligibility please visit www.schoolbuscity.com



THE EDUCATION CENTRE - AURORA

60 Wellington Street West, Aurora, Ontario L4G 3H2

Tel: 905.722.3201 905.895.7216 905.727.3141 416.969.8131

Fax: 905.727.1931

Website: www.yrdsb.ca

May 24, 2018

Dear YRDSB Families,

As you may be aware, season two of the **Netflix series 13 Reasons Why** became available on Netflix May 18, 2018. As you may recall from our letter last spring, the series deals with the difficult topic of suicide and other complex issues. Season one outlined the story of a 17-year-old girl who dies by suicide. She leaves behind cassette tapes for 13 people whose actions she perceived as reasons why she killed herself. Season two explores several other difficult topics including self-harm/cutting, bullying, struggles with identity, sexual assault, gun violence and more, which may be emotionally triggering for vulnerable students.

Although the creators of the series indicate the intent of the show is to help students recognize their effect on others, it does not present viable alternatives to suicide, or have a strong focus on seeking help. There are many negative portrayals of adults and seeking help within the series. This is not a helpful message for youth.

Series like **13 Reasons Why** may promote myths and misinformation about suicide. We hope the information in this letter will help you have open conversations with your child. Discussing important but difficult topics with your child lets them know you are open to talking about these subjects. This may make it more likely they will talk to you if they have any concerns/challenges. If young people do not feel they can talk to adults about these subjects, they are likely to seek advice on the internet or from friends, or worse may not talk to anyone.

You may wish to ask your child if they have heard of or seen this series. If your child has not already watched the series but would like to, review it first yourself. Consider watching it together rather than having them watch it alone. This will help you to know how your child is affected by the content. While many youths know the difference between a TV drama and real life, talking with adults about this subject is very important. Adults can help share the message that **suicide is not a solution to problems** and **help is available**. You can help your child process their feelings and answer questions about the issues in the series. **This is particularly important if you feel your child is isolated, struggling or vulnerable.**

The following suggestions may help with the conversation:

- Remind them that the series is fictional.
- Share that it is normal to experience periods of stress and distress. Offer healthy coping strategies, such as. exercise, art, journaling, talking to friends and adults they trust.
- Let them know that there are adults at school who care and can help.
- Talk about where to seek support if they need it from family members, counsellors, coaches, teachers, faith leaders, a crisis line like Kids Help Phone - 1-800-668-6868.

- Talk openly about emotional distress and suicide. Doing so in a fact-based manner does not increase suicide risk (see tips below).
- If you have concerns about your child's mental health, see your family physician and/or share your concerns with the school.
- If the concern is more urgent, you may call York Region's Crisis Response Service, 1-855-310-COPE (2673), the Mental Health Helpline 1-866-531-2600, or take your child to a hospital emergency department. If there is an emergency call 911.

****If you do not want your child to watch this show, Netflix has some resources to help parents. They offer a parental control you can apply individually to this series in the form of a PIN number. You can assign a unique code for both seasons of "13 Reasons Why." You can set this in the account section of your Netflix account.*

As family members it can be difficult to know if a loved one is struggling with thoughts of suicide. The information below offers several important considerations.

Possible signs someone may be having thoughts of suicide:

- Suicide threats, both direct ("I am going to kill myself." "I need life to stop."), and indirect ("I need it to stop." "I wish I could fall asleep and never wake up."). Threats can be verbal or written and are often found in online postings (Instagram, Facebook)
- Preoccupation with death in conversation, writing, drawing and social media
- Changes in behavior, appearance/hygiene, sleep habits, thoughts and/or feelings. This can include someone who is typically sad who suddenly becomes extremely happy.
- Emotional distress.
- Withdrawing from friends and family

Trust yourself as a parent/guardian. If you feel something is not right with your child or notice any of the signs above, do not hesitate to ask directly about thoughts of suicide. This may be a tough conversation to have, but sends a message that you are open to talking about suicide and increases the chances your child will seek help. That might sound like,

"Sometimes when people are under stress, having trouble with friends, and worrying a lot, they have thoughts of suicide. Are you having thoughts of suicide?"

Help is Available:

Many staff members in York Region District School Board are trained in suicide intervention and want to help. If you have concerns about your child's mental health, or need additional resources, please talk to your family doctor or contact your child's school. Our staff members are committed to supporting the well-being of every YRDSB learner and can help to connect you with resources for support.

To learn more about safely talking about suicide, consider taking suicide intervention training. Find out more at www.livingworks.net.

Further resources about the series can be found at: www.13reasonswhytoolkit.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Louise Sirisko". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Louise Sirisko
Director of Education