

# Northern Highlights



## Community Update

Week of October 7th, 2024

School Address 40 Bridgenorth Dr, Aurora ON, L4G 7S6  
Phone Number 905-727-4224  
Principal: Jodi Fine [jodi.fine@yrdsb.ca](mailto:jodi.fine@yrdsb.ca)  
Elementary Office Admin. Assist.: [diane.oreilly@yrdsb.ca](mailto:diane.oreilly@yrdsb.ca)  
Diane O'Reilly  
Superintendent: Deborah Joyce [deborah.joyce@yrdsb.ca](mailto:deborah.joyce@yrdsb.ca)  
Trustee: Melanie Wright [melanie.wright@yrdsb.ca](mailto:melanie.wright@yrdsb.ca)

| DATE                         | ACTIVITIES                                | UPCOMING   |
|------------------------------|---|--|
| Monday<br>Oct. 7<br>Day 4    |   | <p>October is:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Islamic Heritage Month</li><li>• 2SLGBTQ+I History Month</li><li>• Latinx and Hispanic Heritage Month</li></ul> <p>Picture Retake Day - Tuesday, November 5, 2024</p> |
| Tuesday<br>Oct. 8<br>Day 5   | Photo Day                                 |  |
| Wednesday<br>Oct. 9<br>Day 1 |   |  |
| Thursday<br>Oct. 10<br>Day 2 | IB Information Night at Dr. G.W. Williams |  |
| Friday<br>Oct. 11<br>Day 3   |   |  |

### \*INFORMATION & UPDATES\*

**CAREGIVERS CONSULTS: SUPPORTING TAMIL FAMILIES:** Tamil families are invited to meet with Nijatha Subramaniam, School Social Worker supporting the Tamil Diaspora, to learn about their child's mental health and well-being, school engagement and community resources. Please [click here](#) for further information.

**OCTOBER STAFF AND FAMILY SUPPORTS:** It is important to acknowledge that as we approach October 7, this month in particular will be a challenging one for many in our community. There are students, staff and families in York Region who are experiencing the effects and local realities of the conflict in the Middle East in very real and difficult ways, particularly those who identify as Israeli, Jewish, Muslim and Palestinian.

As an education community and school board, we will focus on supporting students, staff and our community, and creating safe, inclusive and welcoming learning environments.

We continue to remind our community that we will not tolerate any act of hate or discrimination, including antisemitism and Islamophobia. We have a [Protocol for Addressing Incidents of Hate and/or Discrimination](#) that outlines how we will investigate and document all incidents of hate and discrimination.

Students can continue to use [Report It](#) to report incidents, anonymously if they choose. Report It is available on the Board website homepage and all school website homepages.

If your child needs support, help is available through our schools. Please speak with your child's teacher or administrator to learn more about the resources and supports available and how to access them. School Mental Health Ontario has [prepared information](#) for families on this topic. In addition, guidelines for families on how to navigate conversations after traumatic events are available on the [Board's website](#).

We are also providing resources to educators to respond to student questions in a sensitive manner, continue to create safe, supportive learning environments and to provide support to students who are in distress. We have also shared with all school board staff the message from the Minister of Education, which states in part, *"The focus in our schools must always be on learning. This means our schools and school-related activities should*

*never be used as vehicles for political protests that enable inflammatory, discriminatory, and hateful content. While everyone is entitled to their own political opinions, they are not entitled to disseminate political biases into our classrooms.” (Minister of Education, September 2024)*

We are also offering support to students, staff and families through identity-specific sessions in partnership with community partners. We want to ensure that those who may need it have access to support, and that they feel supported. Families, if you are worried about your child, please reach out to your child’s teacher or principal.

Supportive Evening for Families who Identify as Jewish

*October 9, 2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*

The session will be available via the [MS Teams Live link](#) for families and caregivers.

This session will be led by Leanne Matlow, a cognitive behaviour therapy counsellor from Toronto who supports children and teens with significant experience supporting the Jewish community in the Greater Toronto Area.

Second Supportive Evening for Families who identify as Jewish

*November 4, 2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*

The session will be available via the [MS Teams Live link](#) for families and caregivers.

Presented by [Jewish Family and Child Services](#), a multi-service agency that strengthens and supports individuals, children, families and communities within the context of Jewish values. Jewish Family and Child Services offers affordable, professional counselling that is confidential and convenient.

Supportive Evening for Families who identify as Muslim

*October 8, 2024, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.*

The session will be available via the [MS Teams Live link](#) for families and caregivers.

Presented by [Naseeha](#), who provide an anonymous, non-judgmental, confidential and toll-free peer support helpline for any youth experiencing personal challenges, including those of Muslim identities. Naseeha’s services are open to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, physical and mental health, and religion.

Supportive Evening for Families who identify as Palestinian

*October 17, 2024, 7:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.*

The session will be available via the [MS Teams Live link](#) for families and caregivers.

Presented by [Naseeha](#), who provide an anonymous, non-judgmental, confidential and toll-free peer support helpline for any youth experiencing personal challenges, including those of Muslim identities. Naseeha’s services are open to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, physical and mental health, and religion.

Second Supportive Evening for Families who identify as Muslim

*November 12, 2024, 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m.*

The session will be available via the [MS Teams Live link](#) for families and caregivers.

Presented by [Naseeha](#), who provide an anonymous, non-judgmental, confidential and toll-free peer support helpline for any youth experiencing personal challenges, including those of Muslim identities. Naseeha’s services are open to all regardless of age, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, family makeup, social status, income, ability, physical and mental health, and religion.

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It matters as a community that we show up for one another, and it matters as a learning organization that we create the conditions that enable all of our students to focus on learning and to be successful. That includes ensuring that all of our students feel safe and know that their identities are valued. All of us - staff, students, families and community partners - play a role in helping us to achieve that. We thank you for your partnership in these efforts in support of student learning, achievement and well-being.

#### \*INFORMATION FROM PREVIOUS ISSUES OF THE NORTHERN HIGHLIGHTS\*

**SEEKING GENTLY USED BOARD GAMES AND PUZZLES:** We are seeking donations of new or gently used board games, card games and puzzles for our students to enjoy during indoor recess. These items provide fun, engaging activities that encourage social interaction and problem-solving on inclement weather days. If you have any games or puzzles that your family no longer uses, we would greatly appreciate your contribution! Donations can be dropped off at the school office. Thank you for supporting our school community!

**NFALL TENANT RIGHTS WORKSHOP:** Tenants' Housing Rights Free Virtual Workshops Fall 2024. All parents are welcome to attend any of these free virtual workshops. Click [here](#) for more information.

**INTERNATIONAL WALK TO SCHOOL MONTH:** International Walk to School Month (IWALK) is an annual celebration of active transportation that takes place around the world throughout the month of October. IWALK Month officially launches October 2, 2024. When walking to school, here are some important safety tips to remember:

- Look all ways before you cross the street. Always STOP, LOOK and LISTEN before crossing.
- Cross at intersections and crosswalks, when possible.
- Always make eye contact with drivers before you cross the street.
- Obey traffic signals and signs.
- Use a sidewalk if there is one.

For anyone who can't walk or cycle to school every day, we encourage you to try choosing an active mode of travel two or three times a week or consider parking and walking a block to decrease pollution and improve safety around your school. If you choose to drive, please be mindful of students who walk and cycle, drive slowly and be highly vigilant of your surroundings. If your child is eligible for bus/student transportation, have them walk to the bus stop. Riding the bus is sustainable!

**YORK REGION EDUCATIONAL SERVICES (YRES):** YRES Fall Workshops offer free virtual programs like the French Reading Club and Young Scientist, designed for K-12 students to spark interest in various subjects. Additionally, in-person workshops at community centers are available for students in Grades 6-12 and offer topics such as Discovering Volunteering Opportunities. Thanks to the support from community partners, all programs are provided at no cost. Please [click here for in-person programs](#). Please [click here for virtual programs](#).

**FARM TO FRESH:** Farm To Fresh is a fundraiser that allows families to purchase fresh produce from local farmers in our area. This initiative supports our farmers as well as NLPS as we receive 40% of the profits. These funds help to support our students in various ways. Families may place orders for vegetable or apple bundles through School CashOnline. The due date to order is Friday, October 11, 2024.

**PIZZA LUNCH ORDERS:** Please place orders for pizza through School CashOnline before Thursday, September 26, 2024. Late orders after this date will NOT be accepted.