



PIERRE BERTON



PANTHERS

Pierre Berton Public School

Pierre Berton Public School
470 Via Campanile, Vaughan, ON
905-303-4540

Important Dates:

Sept. 10	1st day of School Cohort 1 - A-L
Sept. 11	Cohort 2 M-Z
Sept 14	A-L
Sept. 15	M-Z
Sept. 16	1st Full Day – All Students
Sept. 19	Rosh Hashanah
Sept. 27	Yom Kippur
Sept. 30	Orange Shirt Day

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Administrators' Message

September, 2020



Happy New School Year! I love that I get to celebrate the new year twice each year. It marks a new beginning, new hope, new goals and a renewed sense of optimism for what is to come. In my 11 years as a principal, I have never had an opening like this one. I remind myself, I'm living history, and one day, when I'm old, I'll remind a younger generation how I lived through a pandemic, how we shut the schools and how I begrudgingly became a better cook. Of course this is nothing compared to my grandmother, who lived past 100 and was able to tell me stories of living through two World Wars, as well as the Spanish Flu.

One thing, the pandemic has made us do, is scrutinize all our procedures, question how to make things better. It made us think outside the box to find different ways to deliver high quality programs. When this is over, my hope is that some of these practices will continue and we will strengthen our already great school.

A big pantherific welcome to our new students and families! We hope you will love Pierre Berton as much as I do. To those who are returning, myself and the staff can't wait to see you. For those who have decided to stay online we hope to see you back again soon. We will continue to communicate with all families whether you are online or in our face 2 face option.

Be safe and have a wonderful New Year!



Cathy Martino-Porretta
Principal

Principal

C. Martino-Porretta

Vice-Principal

G. Avsec

Office Staff

J. Purdy

A. Gabrielli

E. Fabiano

Superintendent

Dan Wu

905 764 6830

Trustee

Dr. Sinclair



Writing the Pages of our Future!

Tentative School Organization

Pierre Berton Public School Staff List

Staff Name	Position
Kerri Hardy / Michelle Vala-Fernandes	JK/SK
Melissa Diamanti/Gobega Ramajeyam	JK/SK
Jennifer Cain & Nickisha Stephenson	JK/SK
Stephanie Vecchiarelli	Grade 1
Emily Burns	Grade 1
Amelia Recoskie	Grade 2
Stephanie Malisani	Grade 2
Laura Paglia	Grade 2
Karina Starobinsky	Grade 3
Mandip Samra	Grade 3
Stephanie Ridgely	Grade 3
Nicole Gross	Grade 4
Alexandra Bomba	Grade 4
Melissa Abballe	Grade 4/5
Christopher Pennino	Grade 5
Pam Schipper	Grade 5
David Abitbol	Grade 6
Jessica Oliviera	Grade 6
Caitlin Morrison	Grade 6/7
Nadine Cheddie	Grade 7
Shawn Sanghera	Grade 7
Danielle Title	Grade 7/8
Derek Herbert	Grade 8
Kristina Gerrard	Grade 8
Stephanie Bezaire & Lindsey Cottes	SERT
Diane Cipollone	RR
Laura Stolf & Lily Zhu	French
Daniel Cipollone	Music
Katlynn Smith	Austism CC
Danya Lantz	Prep
Kalpana Vaze	Prep/ELL
Vanessa Augello	Prep/ELL
Christina Direito	Support Staff
Ambreen Agha	Support Staff
Nathan Thompson	Support Staff
Ted Carlisle	Child and Youth Worker
Sephora Bruno	Support Staff
Joan Ramlogan-Maraj	Child and Youth Worker
Jane Purdy	Office Admin Assistant
Anna Gabrielli	Office Admin Assistant
Emilia Fabiano	Office Admin Assistant
Mike Richardson	Lead Caretaker
Mark Acchione	Caretaker
Daniel Tansley	Caretaker
Arun Sharma	Caretaker
Gisella Avsec	Vice-Principal
Cathy Martino-Porretta	Principal

This is our tentative school organization for the 2020-2021 school year. Please note that due to enrolment changes, we may need to reorganize classes.

We appreciate your support.

School Day Organization

School Day Organization: Kindergarten—Grade 8

8:30 a.m.—2:50 p.m.

8:15—8:30: Entry

8:30—10:10: Instructional Time

10:10—10:30: Recess

10:30—12:10: Instructional Time

12:10—1:10: Lunch

1:10—2:50: Instructional Time

2:50: Dismissal

Professional Activity & Training Days

Tuesday, September 1, 2020
 Wednesday, September 2, 2020
 Thursday, September 3, 2020
 Friday, November 13, 2020
 Friday, January 15, 2021
 Monday, February 1, 2021
 Monday, May 31, 2021

School Holidays

Grades 1-8 -First Day of Classes: Thursday, September 10, 2020 If your child's last begins with **A-L**

Grades 1-8 - First Day of Classes: Friday, September 11, 2020 If your child's last begins with **M-Z**

Last Day of Classes: Tuesday, June 29, 2021

School Holidays

Labour Day	Monday, September 7, 2020
Thanksgiving Day	Monday, October 12, 2020
Winter Break	Monday, December 21, 2020
	Friday, January 1, 2021 inclusive
Family Day	Monday, February 15, 2021
Mid-Winter Break	Monday, March 15, 2021
	Friday, March 19, 2021 inclusive
Good Friday	Friday, April 2, 2021
Easter Monday	Monday, April 5, 2021
Victoria Day	Monday, May 24, 2021

Important Information

Health and Safety

We ask families to remember that, as a result of health and safety guidelines:

On a daily basis, parents/guardians of students under 18 and students over 18 are responsible to review and adhere to the [checklist from York Region Public Health](#). Any student experiencing COVID-19 symptoms **is required** to remain home.

- * Where possible, students must maintain a physical distance at all times, as they enter, move through and exit the building.
- * Students in Grades 4 to 12 will wear face non-medical masks while in school. Students in Kindergarten to Grade 3 are strongly encouraged to wear masks while in school. Please send your child to school with a mask and sealable bag (Ziplock with your child's name on it). We encourage you to send three masks in case a new is needed throughout the day.
- * Until further notice, visitor(s) are not to enter the school during hours of operation unless identified through a prearranged exception.
- * We are doing what we can to minimize class sizes. Students will remain with their class throughout the day, including for lunch and recess.
- * Floor decals and classroom set-up are designed to minimize close contact.
- * Hand sanitizers will be placed at the entrance to the school and in all classrooms and students will wash or sanitize their hands throughout the day, including when entering or leaving the classroom, before and after eating, after using the washroom and after touching shared objects

What to Bring for Kindergarten Students

Please send your child to school with:

- a mask (strongly encouraged but not required for Kindergarten students) with a labelled Ziploc bag.
- snack and lunch
- change of clothes (labelled in a bag)
- sunscreen and hat
- water bottle

[Please label all of your child's items with their name.](#)

[First day of classes for Kindergarten-year one \(JK\) A-L –Monday, September 14, 2020](#)

[First day of classes for Kindergarten-year one \(JK\) M-Z –Tuesday, September 15, 2020](#)

[First day of classes for Kindergarten –Year Two \(SK\) A– Z -Thursday, September 10, 2020](#)

School Start Up Package

A number of important forms have been included in the 'School Start Up Package'.

This year the package will be sent electronically.

Please take the time to read this material carefully and resend the forms as soon as possible.



Important Information

Lunch Time Consideration

Students are strongly encouraged to remain at school for lunch and eat in designated areas (ie. classroom)

Students are to wash hands or use hand sanitizer before and after eating

Students are to be reminded not to share food, utensils or drinks

Students **must** bring their lunch, including hot lunches.

For safety reasons, lunch drop offs will not be permitted

All special lunch programs/food days (e.g., pizza, sub, etc.) have been cancelled

All food delivery services (UberEats/Skip the Dishes) will not be accepted



Regarding Visitors/Volunteers

Until further notice, visitor(s) are not to enter the school during hours of operation unless identified through a prearranged exception.

Visitors to schools are required to wear a medical mask at all times. In the event one is not worn, one will be provided and must be worn at all times when in the school.

Please, we encourage that you do not drop off any lunches for students or make dental/doctor appointments during the day unless students will not be returning back to school on that day.

Healthy Schools

We are committed to ensuring that we support Healthy Schools initiatives for the health and well-being of our students. Throughout the year, we will be participating in Healthy Schools initiatives, including walk to school days. In order to support this endeavour, we ask that you do not send any food or other items in recognition of birthdays or holidays. This not only supports the health of our students, but it also protects valuable instructional time. We greatly appreciate your support with this initiative.

Physical Education Classes

Students will participate in physical education classes weekly.

All students from grades four to eight will be participating in gym classes but they will not be allowed to change their clothing for gym. **Change rooms will remain locked.**

Please make sure that all students are dressed appropriately for each class. Students are required to wear shorts or track pants, t-shirt, and indoor running shoes.

Important Information

Electronic Devices

Please do not send your child to school with expensive electronic equipment. The students should not have cell phones, iPods, etc. in class or during recesses at school. These devices will be taken from the student if they are found in a classroom. The school will not assume responsibility for these valuable items. Other items should not be brought to school as well.

This list includes, but is not limited to, skateboards, roller blades, wheelies, toys, scooters or laser pointers. These items are best used at home and are not to come to school. For personal safety and security, some parents want their children to have cellular telephones. We understand that desire and support it. Cell phones and other personal communication devices must be turned off and kept out of sight during all instructional periods, except with the clear permission of the classroom teacher. The school is not responsible for personal items that go missing at the school. If we see (or hear) a cell phone at school it will be confiscated and given to the office. The phone will be returned to the student at the end of the school day.

Please note that cameras and cell phone camera functions are not permitted to be used on school property without explicit permission from the principal or teacher. The inappropriate use of cell phones, especially camera phones can become a problem in schools. Let's work together to ensure that it is not a problem at Pierre Berton Public School.

Student Agendas

Available on Cash ONLINE for \$5 is information for purchasing the agenda planner for students in **Grades 1 to 5**. Students will receive their agendas after the purchase is made online. Work and study habits are an important part of becoming an independent lifelong learner. Students learn valuable organizational skills such as recording homework, tests and assignment dates. The agenda also provides an excellent communication tool between school and home. We recognize that many of our intermediate students utilize technology as a tool for organization. For students who do not, we hope you choose to purchase an agenda as it is an effective way to help your child to develop homework routines and organizational skills.

Skateboard Park and Helmet Safety

A skateboard park sits just alongside our school. For safety reasons, we encourage students to keep their skateboards at home. Students will not be permitted to use the skateboard park during the instructional day or at lunchtime.

As well, please review the importance of wearing a helmet for all wheeled sports after school or on the weekends. Helmets should always be a requirement when skateboarding, rollerblading or bike riding. All students for safety reason are encouraged to go straight home after school.



Message from Our Trustee

As we begin a rather different start to the school year, I want to take this opportunity to welcome all new and returning students and families. Whether you are returning to school in person or participating in remote, online learning, we look forward to welcoming you into safe, inclusive and engaging learning spaces.

Staff members have been working hard over the summer months with the Ministry of Education and public health experts to develop a [reopening plan](#) that prioritizes the health, safety and well-being of our students and ensures that important [health and safety measures](#) are in place.

Please know that whatever learning model you chose, we will continue to provide your children with high quality education, and to support their learning, achievement and well-being. Our school staff are prepared to help your child transition back into our learning environments, and we will continue to partner with families to support your child's success.

We know that families have many questions about what to expect as their children return to school. You can find information about what to expect at the start of the school year on the Board website, including frequently asked questions that you may find helpful at www.yrdsb.ca/school-reopening.

As your school board trustee, it is my role to advocate for quality public education in York Region, and to ensure that our students remain at the centre of all of our decision making. The [Board of Trustees](#) makes [policy](#) and [budget](#) decisions, and communicates with the public, among other [responsibilities](#).

We are also responsible for setting direction for the school board, through our [Multi-Year Strategic Plan](#). This plan sets out four priorities: Foster Well-Being and Mental Health, Build Collaborative Relationships, Champion Equity and Inclusivity, and Empower Ethical Leadership.

The relationship that we have with families is important, and I will continue to keep you informed of our work and priorities. You can also find the [message from the Chair of the Board](#) on the Board's website. You are welcome to contact me if you have any questions or concerns.

I hope you have a great start to the school year and wish you a happy, healthy and successful year ahead.

Safe, Caring and Supportive Schools

Medication

Either on a regular basis or at times throughout the year, some students may need to take medication at school. Parents are required to complete a Request for Administration of Medication Form signed by the parents and approved by the principal before the medication can be given or stored in the school. Written permission is required for ALL medications including inhalers, Aspirin, Tylenol, etc. All medication is kept locked in the office and students are supervised as they take any medication. Students are not permitted at any time to bring medication to school and keep it in the classroom, lunch bags, backpacks or lockers. Epi-pens should be worn by the student.


Keeping Our School Safe

In accordance with the Principal's responsibilities under the Education Act to ensure a safe and orderly learning environment, the school has a right to search school property, such as lockers and desks, without notice to or permission of any person. From time to time, the police may be invited onto school property to conduct their own searches, and these searches may be conducted without notice or permission of any member of the school community as per our Joint Board and Police Protocol. When conducting a search of school property, persons or personal property, the police are responsible for conforming to all legal requirements with respect to searches.



ATTENDANCE/SAFE ARRIVAL PROGRAM

If your child is absent:

- Send a note with a sibling, or neighbour before the absence if possible, OR
- Use our online process via  Edsby®
- Please register for this user-friendly online service. All families should have received an invite to register your child. Contact the office if you have any questions.
- Parents/guardians telephone the school at 905-303-4540 to leave a message with your child's name, teacher, and the anticipated length of absence. Please leave a message on the school voice mail outside the school office hours of 8:30 a.m. to 3:45 p.m. or by email at: pierre.berton.ps@yrdsb.ca
- Contact the school if your child will not be returning for the afternoon or will be late arriving at school.
- Send a note when your child has an appointment which requires that he/she arrive late or must leave the school during the day.

* Make sure to keep all phone numbers up to date.

Students must sign in and out in the binder at the school office.

IF YOUR CHILD IS NOT AT SCHOOL AND IS NOT ACCOUNTED FOR BY A NOTE OR TELEPHONE CALL, THE SCHOOL SECRETARY WILL:

- Call home to check (and if not accounted for)
- Call the parents at work (and if the child is still not accounted for)
- Call the emergency numbers (and if the child is still not accounted for)
- **We will then telephone the York Regional Police**

Punctuality is Important!

Punctuality is a life skill that is valued by school, employers in the workforce, and society. Regular attendance ensures continuity of program and assists students in achieving academic success as well as maintaining social ties. Students can enter the building between 8:15 and 8:30am. The instructional day begins at 8:30 am sharp. Please note that there will be indoor supervision beginning at 8:15 am ***Please help your child start each school day prepared to learn!***

Last year, there were a tremendous number of students arriving to school late on a regular basis. At times, we had approximately fifty students receiving late slips in the morning. We ask all families to put morning routines in place to ensure that children arrive on time for school. They should plan to enter between 8:15 and 8:25 a.m. Several strategies will be used to help students who are repeatedly late to school. Students will be expected to make up lost time during recess or after school. We will inform parents if a student's attendance is a matter of concern. Severe cases will be referred to the York Region District School Board's Attendance Counselor.

Safe, Caring and Supportive Schools (continued)

Creating a Safe and Healthy School for Students with Allergies

This is an additional challenge for schools attended by children with allergies, especially life-threatening allergies. While we take every step to create a risk-free environment, school staff and parents can take important steps to minimize potentially fatal allergic reactions as there are implications for the whole school, not just individual classrooms. It is especially important that parents communicate a life-threatening allergy to the school as soon as they are aware of it. Please notify the principal and your child's teacher so that we take the steps to create accurate records and inform staff of the established protocol.



We ask that you avoid sending any foods that may contain peanuts and/or nuts. Please check the list of ingredients for peanut oil/butter/sauce/flour/meal, mixed nuts, ground nuts, goober peas, and artificial nuts. Examples include: cookies, chocolate, granola bars, some cereal bars and some chocolate nut spreads. Avoid products that say "may contain peanut/nuts". Imported products have different labelling requirements, please read the labels carefully when sending these products to school.

A substitute peanut butter product is being marketed to consumers as a safe alternative for children to bring to schools in place of peanut butter. We ask that parents refrain from including these kinds of products in your child's lunches or snacks. These products tend to look, taste, and smell very much like peanut butter. While the product is nut free, it mimics a known allergen that causes anaphylaxis in some children to the degree that it is indistinguishable from the allergen. It is a convincing substitute, opening up the possibility that it can be confused as peanut butter, or worse yet, peanut butter could be confused as this soy-based product.

The safety and well-being of our students is our first priority, which is why our schools have procedures in place to minimize risk of anaphylaxis reactions in our students. We sincerely appreciate your cooperation in avoiding the use of these products to assist in our continued efforts to create a safe, caring and inclusive learning environment for all students. We thank you for your cooperation. Remember we must all work together to keep our children safe!

School Yard Safety

In order to prevent physical injury and because of our concern for student safety, students at Pierre Berton Public School are expected to avoid activities that involve aggressive play and touching. Activities that are not acceptable include wrestling, piggy-backing, tripping, pushing, shoving, body-checking, poking, punching and other forms of play in stairwells, hallways and playgrounds.

Please take the time to review these expectations with your child(ren).

Student Transportation

Student Transportation Services (STS) is a joint venture between the catholic and public school boards in York Region. The mandate of STS is to provide a safe, efficient and on-time transportation for students.

Transportation officers design and manage bus routes based on Board approved criteria as set out in policy #680. The school staff does not create bus routes or determine who is eligible to ride the bus. Parents and students can access a variety of information on the STS website www.schoolbuscity.com.

This includes eligibility for bussing and pick up locations (if eligible), time for pick-up and time of drop off. (please make sure you are at the bus stop for AM, 7 minutes before actual time of arrival).

Please note that only students who are eligible for bussing will be permitted to ride the school bus.



LUNCH ASSISTANTS

If you are available to work for one hour each day, please contact our office at
905-303-4540

Let's Work Together for a Safe Student Drop-Off and Pick-Up!

It is important for us to outline the Kiss and Ride expectations to ensure that all of our students, parents and staff are safe. As you know, the Kiss and Ride can become very congested in the mornings and after school. We ask for your cooperation in reducing the congestion. This is possible if we work together as a school community. We ask that families arrive prior to 8:25 a.m. in the morning to alleviate the last minute rush. Students may enter the building between 8:15 and 8:30am. If you are driving your child to school, please consider parking on Via Campanile to drop off your child. If you choose to use the Kiss and Ride, please ensure that you **drive your vehicle up to the FRONT of the drop-off zone before allowing your child to exit the car**. When parents stop their car closer to the school yard it creates an unsafe situation for our children and frustration for families who are trying to follow the established drop-off routines. A reminder that **YOU MAY NOT STOP AND LEAVE YOUR VEHICLE in the Kiss and Ride**. If you wish to walk your child to the yard, please park on Via Campanile or in a designated parking spot.

Bus Loop: Only board transportation vehicles are permitted in this area. Please use the Kiss and Ride at all times of the day, including lunch. We want to ensure the safety of all of our students.



PLEASE DO NOT STOP AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LOOP BY THE YARD.



Please make sure that student's backpack is on their lap not in the truck of car.



Kiss and Ride Drop-Off: Only drop off in the area marked in white (not the passing lane). Please move up to the front of the marked area to allow other cars to stop.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- ◆ Please ensure that if you are using the Kiss and Ride that you proceed **SLOWLY AND CAUTIOUSLY** through the parking lot. We want to ensure that everyone is safe.
- ◆ When pulling out from a parking spot or the curb, please ensure that you check for students/parents crossing and oncoming traffic.
- ◆ Also, please note that staff supervising at the front enter the school at 8:30 am as they need to be in class with students.
- ◆ When picking up at the end of the day, the only area permitted for stopping is the Kiss and Ride lane by the curb. Please **DO NOT** idle behind the parked cars.



Positive Climates for Learning

EcoSchools—We received a Silver standing!



The Ontario EcoSchools Program is an environmental education program that incorporates environmental education with environmentally-responsible action. The program is designed to help schools take an organized approach to improving environmental performance. We know that protecting the environment for future generations is everyone's responsibility. We are committed to continuing a strong school focus to ensure we implement environmentally friendly practices and procedures each and every day. As part of this responsibility, we will continue:

- Boomerang lunches (using reusable lunch containers & bringing all left over food/garbage home);
- Recycling program;
- Energy conservation (turning lights and computers off when not in use)

How Can You Help? By packing a litterless lunch each and every day you will be modelling the importance of protecting the environment and supporting our school focus. It is important that we all work together.

How to pack a **Litterless Lunch**:

- ⇒ A reusable lunch bag or box (not a throw-away, single-use plastic or paper bag).
- ⇒ Reusable containers for packing food (no plastic wrap, foil, plastic bags, single-serving containers, pre-packaged foods). Hard plastic food containers or re-use of plastic tubs are suitable options.
- ⇒ Reusable drink containers e.g. thermos, or reusable bottle.
- ⇒ Non-disposable cutlery and a cloth napkin.

To support our **'boomerang' lunches**, everyday any uneaten food and any waste material produced must be returned home and not become part of the school's waste collection. This supports our EcoSchool initiative and helps parents monitor what their child is eating during the day. Small green bins are available to dispose of small bits during lunch. WE hope this year we hope to achieve gold so please help support all our ECO initiatives.

