

Laurier Link

January and February 2016

School Priorities: Healthy, Safe and Respectful Learning Environment, Partnerships, Literacy

School Motto: 'On apprend et on s'épanouit ensemble'

Sir Wilfrid Laurier P.S. is a single track French Immersion School (Grades 2 to 8).

Principal and Vice Principal: Mme Laurie Finn and Mme Kathryn Gravill
Administrative Assistant, Secretary and Receptionist: Mrs. Carmen Lo, Mrs. Rama Kanagarajah and Mrs. Debbie Taylor
Telephone: 905 927-1452 Fax: 905 927-9591 Email: sir.wilfrid.laurier.ps@yrdsb.ca
Superintendent: Mr. Peter Tse Telephone: 905 940-7800
School Council Co-Chairs for 2015-2016: Ms Houri Awedikian and Ms Juliann Ng
School Council Email: sir.wilfrid.laurier.ps@sc.yrdsb.ca
School Website: <http://www.sirwilfridlaurier.ps.yrdsb.ca>
School Twitter Account: #laurieryrdsb
Trustee: Billy Pang Telephone: 647 461-9965 Email: billypang@yrdsb.ca
Board Website: www.yrdsb.ca Ministry Website: www.edu.gov.on.ca
SWL Before and After School Child Care (Upper Canada): 905 887-7927

Upcoming Events

January and February 2016: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/sirwilfridlaurier.ps/NewsEvents/Pages/School-Calendar.aspx>

Message From Our Trustee

It is that time of year when our schools brim with energy and excitement for the many diverse celebrations taking place across our region. I am always happy to join the festivities happening in our schools and appreciate the efforts of our students, staff and community members to bring the holiday season alive.

As we wind down 2015, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our parents and guardians for their support of our students and staff over the past few months. A school community is only as strong and welcoming as the people who make up that community. Our students, staff and community members have continued to demonstrate respect, character and commitment in their work and interactions over the last few months. As a trustee, I consider myself very fortunate to work with such supportive community and staff members.

On behalf of all of the trustees and staff of the York Region District School Board, I would like to wish you and your families a very happy holiday season.

All the best for 2016!

Billy Pang, Trustee

School Improvement Plan: Literacy and Numeracy

French Immersion Information Sessions and Registrations

Information sessions for the French Immersion (FI) program will take place at French Immersion schools on January 14, 2016 at 7 p.m. Please visit YRDSB's website in January 2016 (<http://www.yrdsb.ca/Programs/fi/Pages/Program-Locations.aspx>) to find the FI program location for your elementary school location. FI registration will begin January 15, 2016. Parents or guardians of Senior Kindergarten students entering Grade 1 in 2016, and wishing to enrol in the FI Program, can visit or call the current school office and request an Office Index Card - short version. The 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 15 and February 12, 2016. This eliminates the need to provide duplicate enrollment information or to pre-register.

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. 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. 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.

Primary Class Size Reduction

The Board continues to respond to the Ministry of Education's mandated requirements related to primary class size. In doing so, this has allowed us to make great gains in creating primary classes that maximize teacher time with students in support of their learning. As principal, I am working with my superintendent and Board staff to plan for the upcoming school year. Each school board in the province will have to meet Ministry expectations. In general, on a board-wide basis, 90% of primary classes must have 20 or fewer students, and only 10% may have up to 23. In addition, while classes in grades 4-8 will not have a hard cap, each school board will be required to demonstrate a regional average of approximately 26 students to one teacher. Grade One French Immersion may have up to 23 students. As we proceed through the planning process, I will be sure to keep you informed as to how our school will be meeting with Ministry requirements. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us.

Guide for Parents of Children in French Immersion

Here is the link to a new guide from the Ministry of Education for parents of children in French Immersion called *A Parent's Guide to Supporting Your Child in French Immersion*: <http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/literacynumeracy/parentGuideFrench.pdf>

School Improvement Plan: Programs and Pathways

Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS Classroom Organization for the 2016-2017 School Year

Currently seven classes of Grade One students attend Grade One French Immersion at Sir John A Macdonald Public School. The students in these classes will participate in the Grade Two French Immersion program at Sir Wilfrid Laurier effective September 2016.

Grade 8 High School Registration and Course Selection

Please check the SWL newsletter for Nov/Dec posted on the school website for Open Houses for Grade 8 high schools. Information was sent home hard copy with Grade 8s in late October.

School Improvement Plan: Culture, Caring and Community

Many Faces of Markham

March 21 – The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination was designated by the United Nations General Assembly in 1966 to pull together international communities in the fight against racial discrimination in all forms. The City of Markham celebrates this important day with the annual "Many Faces of Markham" event that is organized by the Markham Race Relations Advisory Committee. Students across Markham are invited to submit works of art, videos and writing pieces to a competition that is part of this event. The theme for 2016 is "Aboriginal Celebrations: Voices from the Past and Future." The submission deadline is Fri., Feb 5 2016. Winners will be presented with awards at the Flato Markham Theatre during the "Many

Faces of Markham" event on Sun, March 20,2016 at 2 p.m. More information is available at www.markham.ca or by e-mailing manyfacesofmarkhamevent@gmail.com. Hard copies of information are also available in the front foyer of the school.

Yellow Brick House and Markham Food Bank Drive

Thank you to the SWL community for its generous support of our unclaimed Lost and Found items to the Yellow Brick House and the donation of food items to the Markham Food Bank.

Re: Student Busing Eligibility

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.

Inclement Weather: School Bus Cancellation Notice

To ensure the safety of students, school bus service may be cancelled due to inclement weather, extreme temperatures and/or poor road conditions. In these cases, parents and students should develop alternate care/transportation arrangements.

Since some busing begins at 7:00 a.m., cancellation decisions must be made by 6:00 a.m. to allow time to communicate this message to bus drivers. Cancellation decisions will only be made after thorough consultation with the Safety Officers of school bus companies servicing York Region and are based on several factors including precipitation, air temperature, road conditions and weather forecast:

Please note the following:

- a decision to cancel school bus service will be **region-wide** meaning all school buses, vans and taxis will not operate
- when bus service is cancelled all school tests and/or examinations will be cancelled and rescheduled
- student trips involving the use of school buses will also be cancelled
- school bus routes may be cancelled when severe weather may not be affecting all municipalities in York Region.** Both the YRDSB and YCDSB operate many regional educational programs. Students attending these programs are transported over large attendance areas encompassing several municipal boundaries. This limits the ability to cancel bus service using a municipality or zone methodology.
- unless otherwise stated, schools will remain open and parents can make arrangements to transport their children to and from school even if school bus services is cancelled. **If buses are cancelled in the morning, they will not operate in the afternoon. Therefore students transported to school by parents will require the same transportation home.**

Parents, students and school staff are asked to access the radio and television stations after 6:00 a.m. to receive bus cancellation information:

RADIO

590 AM	640 AM	680 AM	860 AM	1010 AM	1050 AM
1540 AM	1580 AM	88.5 FM	89.9 FM	92.5 FM	93.1 FM
94.9 FM	95.9 FM	97.3 FM	98.1 FM	99.1 FM	99.9 FM
101.1 FM	102.1 FM	104.5 FM	100.7 FM	107.1 FM	

TELEVISION

CITY TV CTV Barrie CTV Toronto CP24 GLOBAL NEWS

A bus cancellation message will also be available at www.schoolbuscity.com and by calling 1-877-330-3001, or by following the YRDSB and YCDSB on twitter.

Safe School Update

Anaphylactic Reactions:

Parents who have an anaphylactic child are encouraged to have their child wear an epi-pen in a waist pouch at all times at school.

In the Community:

Parents greeting their children after school at the bus stop are asked to watch out for all children as they disembark. If a youngster appears alone, locked out of his/her house, is experiencing difficulty, or something appears unusual, please offer support and contact the school office immediately. Together we can make the school and community a safe place for students.

Snow Safety:

As the weather dictates, teachers discuss snow safety with students. Children may enjoy the snow or ice by playing in it and making snow angels. Students have been told that throwing and kicking snow or ice can result in serious injury or discomfort to others, resulting in a school expectation of neither throwing nor kicking snow. We ask that you reinforce with your children how to play safely in the snow. Please be advised that there will be consequences if your child throws or kicks snow (or any other objects). Our students' safety is a prime concern.

Locker Checks:

The following is an excerpt from the York Region Police protocol (September, 2011):

Administration has the right to search school property, such as lockers and desks, without notice or permission of any person. In addition, police may from time to time be invited onto school property to conduct their own searches. These searches may be conducted without notice or permission from any member of the school community.

Teachers have reviewed the appropriate care of lockers with students expected for this Board property.

Cameras: Students are not to bring cameras to school for the purpose of taking pictures.

Cell Phones: Students are not to use cell phones between 8:15 and 3:00. Contact with parents is to be made through the office.

Internet Safety: Here is information on a new service for a Family and Kid Safe email system.

<https://fss.live.com/Default.aspx>

Vehicle Entrance onto School Property: This is a reminder that the only access for cars is by means of the entrance facing the front doors of the school. The entrance off Stoney Hill is for buses only and the parking lot is an exit only. Signs provide very clear direction. Please follow the signs.

Perfumes and Colognes: Are not allowed on school property due to high incidences of allergies and asthma.

Celebrating Laurier Day on November 20

On November 20, we celebrated Laurier Day, the birth date of Sir Wilfrid Laurier (1841). Sir Wilfrid Laurier was the first francophone and Canadian born prime minister and was known for his skills at collaboration. Each student received a Sir Wilfrid Laurier pencil done in school colours with the school name and website on it.

Student Volunteer Appreciation Lunch

On Thursday, January 21, 2016 students who volunteered during the first half of the school year at Sir Wilfrid Laurier P.S. as Lunch Monitors, Bus Evacuation Day Helpers, Office Helpers, members of the Student Council, and Morning Announcers will be provided a pizza lunch in order for us to say thanks for volunteering and helping at school. Thank you, volunteers!

Professional Activity Day

Friday, January 15, 2016 and Monday, February 1, 2016 are Professional Activity Days for all staff, where *students do not attend school*.

School Council

Our third School Council Meeting will be held on **Wednesday, February 3, 2016**. Thanks in advance to those parents who will be attending the meeting. Our last two meetings are scheduled on Wednesday, April 6 and Wednesday, May 25, 2016. News on the upcoming Pro Grant will be forthcoming from School Council.

Celebrating Multiculturalism

Some Sir Wilfrid P.S. students may be celebrating the following in January and February:

BAHA'I FAITH: February 26 to March 1. **Intercalary Days** are four days that do not belong to any month. They are days of celebration, gift giving, hospitality, and charitable works.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH: Black History Month originated in America and can be traced back to 1926. The Americans celebrated the contributions, culture and history of African Americans during the second week of February. However, in Canada, it was in the 1950s that the Toronto City Council gave Black History Month official recognition. In the UK, Black History Month is celebrated in October. During this month, we recognize the contributions of people of African heritage through classroom discussions in some classrooms and through P.A. announcements.

BUDDHISM: January 1: **Temple Day** has become a day for Canadian Buddhists to attend a special service in the local temple.

February 19: **Lunar New Year**, the day after the new moon, marks the beginning of the new lunar year. It is the year of the Dragon. 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 4713 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 for the Eastern Calendar** is often referred to as the "Ukrainian Christmas". Some Orthodox churches celebrate the birth of Jesus on this day.

January 19: **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.

February 18: **Ash Wednesday** (Western calendar) is the beginning of Lent, the forty day period (excluding Sundays) of prayer, repentance and self-denial that precedes Easter. It is a reminder of the days Jesus spent alone in the wilderness.

February 23: **First Day of Lent**, (Eastern Calendar), which is the great fast, is the last six weeks of a ten week period before Easter. This day is also known as Clean Monday. Some Eastern Churches may start Lent a week before on February 16.

HINDUISM: January 14: **Makar Sankranti** is known as Lobri, Pongal and Til Sankranti. It marks the winter solstice and is primarily a rice harvest festival.

January 24: **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.

ISLAM: January 3: **Mawlid-un-Nabi** celebrates the birth of the prophet Muhammad.

SIKHISM: January 5: **Birth 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.

Holiday and Observances Calendar

The Board's Holidays and Observances Calendar is presently being drafted for the 2016-17 school year. Included again this year will be student artwork (including that from Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS students) from Elementary and Secondary schools for the calendar cover and for each month. Artwork includes photographs, original works and student digitally generated images. It is requested that submitted artwork reflect the faith/religious/cultural diversity of the York Region Community. Students may wish to consult the calendar and consider different types of celebrations (eg. Diwali, Chanukah, Christmas, Kwanza, etc.) and the different manner in which they could be celebrated (eg. Sharing in celebration with family, going to church, Mosque, Temple, etc.). For more information about the format of submissions, please contact your child's teacher or Mme Finn. The deadline for submissions is Feb. 19, 2016.

Lost and Found

Lost and Found items were displayed during the weeks of Nov 16, 23, 30 and Dec 7 (student-led conferences) through to the week of Dec 11. Unclaimed items were donated to a local charitable organization as a partnership activity.

Character Matters

To date, our students and staff have discussed and practised the Character Matters attributes of **Respect, Responsibility, Courage and Empathy**. In January we will be concentrating on the attribute of **Fairness**. At Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School, fairness means we all strive to sense and appreciate the emotions of others, and to 'walk in their shoes'.

Staff will be encouraging students to:

- Demonstrate appreciation of another's feelings
- Demonstrate concern for another's feelings and
- Try to understand issues from another's perspective even though one may not agree with him/her.

Please reinforce with students at home.

In February, we will be concentrating on the attribute of **Honesty**. At Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School, honesty means that we all will strive to behave in a sincere, trustworthy, and truthful manner.

Staff will be encouraging students to:

- Tell the truth
- Keep promises and
- Admit to one's mistakes

Charitable Support

Sir Wilfrid Laurier staff and students help others by supporting many charitable organizations and their causes. This year we have supported/will support the following organizations: Terry Fox Run; UNICEF; Royal Canadian Legion Poppy Fund; Markham Food Bank, Yellow Brick House, Jump Rope and Hoops for Heart and the Markham Stouffville Hospital. Thank you for your ongoing support as we reinforce with students that we get by giving to others.

Do You Know This Person?

Description:

- Uses really innovative teaching methods
- Supports students who face difficult challenges
- Builds strong relationships with parents and the community to help students learn
- Fosters a culture of equity and respect
- Encourages students to explore new possibilities, take risks, and solve problems in a creative way.

Last seen:

- In schools and school boards across Ontario

If you know someone who fits this description, please visit www.ontario.ca/teachingawards for more information. The Premier's Awards for Teaching Excellence celebrate outstanding school and school board staff. The awards are a great way to thank the people who make a difference in your school.

Reminders for Parents

When parents and visitors are entering the school, they are reminded to please:

- Do not park or double park in the Kiss and Ride as this is for drop off only.
- Enter the office when picking up your child during instructional time so we can call your child from class.
- Refrain from picking up your child during instructional time so as to not disturb the learning of the class;
- Enter the office to sign in and get Visitor or Volunteer identification.
- Check into the office first.
- Check in at the office if planning to pick up your child from the playground at recess time or outdoor physical education classes.
- Use the Kiss and Ride for student drop off and leave the Bus Lane clear for the buses.

Student Drop Off and Pick Up

If you are driving your children to and/or from school, please understand that the yellow lines painted on the driveway in the Kiss and Ride and front of the school mean NO PARKING! Please be respectful and obey the NO PARKING signs. Cars are not to stop in the Kiss 'n Ride. In addition, the bus lane is for the use of the buses only. We have two crosswalks in front of the school that provide a safe crossing to the pathway near the sign and encourage parents to park on the street and walk onto school property to meet your child to ease traffic congestion and increase safety. There are times that the gates at the front of the school will be closed and will not allow cars onto school property at the end of the day to reduce traffic congestion particularly on inclement weather days. In addition, please use the crosswalk instead of crossing at the front of the school, between buses and in the line of traffic. The entrance off Stoney Hill is for buses only and the parking lot is an exit only. Signs provide very clear direction. Thank you.

And finally...

Mme Finn and Mme Gravill extend their thanks to parents who continuously support their children, their teachers and administration. We appreciate your positive comments and look forward to working together in the New Year. Happy holidays to all. Classes resume on Monday, January 4, 2016.

Watch for the March/April issue of the Laurier Link posted on the school website on Monday, February 29, 2016. Hard copies are available in the wall stand in the front foyer of the school.

Regards,

Mme Gravill and Mme Finn