

Laurier Link

March/April 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. Deb Taylor
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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>
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Board Website: www.yrdsb.ca Ministry Website: www.edu.gov.on.ca

Upcoming Events

March 2016

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

April 2016

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

Message from our Trustee Billy Pang

Although winter still feels far from over some days, we are now halfway through the school year. With report cards coming home, this is a good time to review progress and celebrate what your children have learned both inside and outside of the classroom. This is also a good time to set goals for the months ahead.

One of our goals set out in the Board of Trustees' [Multi-Year Plan](#) is to "continuously increase student achievement and well-being through a culture of caring and learning." Developing this supportive culture includes engaging parents/guardians and other members of the school community in public education and working together to create safe and supportive school environments that enable students to thrive.

As parents/guardians, there are many ways you can get engaged in your child's education and support their learning, including talking with them about school, communicating with teachers, attending school events or school council meetings, and volunteering in the school. However you get involved, know that you are making a difference.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I wish you all the best an enjoyable and successful second term.

Additional Elementary and Secondary P.A. Days

As a result of provincial labour negotiations, a P.A. Day has been added for all York Region District School Board elementary schools on Friday, May 6, 2016 and secondary schools on Friday, June 3, 2016. You can see the full updated school year calendars on YRDSB's website: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/Pages/default.aspx>

These additional P.A. Days are mandated by the Ministry of Education. On these dates, teachers will be taking part in professional development on provincial education priorities identified by the Ministry of Education.

Message from Public Health regarding Respiratory and Enteric Illnesses

Student absences have increased recently within several schools in York Region, related to illnesses with respiratory and enteric symptoms.

To protect staff, students and families from getting ill, remember to:

- *Stay at home when you are sick, and keep your child home if they are sick*
- *Keep healthy by eating healthy foods, being physically active and ensuring your immunizations are up-to-date, including the seasonal flu shot*
- *Avoid close contact with people who are sick*
- *Wash your hands often with soap and water or using an alcohol-based hand sanitizer when soap and water are not available*
- *Cough and sneeze into your sleeve or a tissue, not your hand, and throw away used tissues immediately*
- *Avoid touching your face*
- *Clean and disinfect common surfaces*

Symptoms of respiratory and/or enteric illness can include:

- *Headache*
- *Chills*
- *Fever (over 38 degrees Celsius or 100 degrees Fahrenheit)*
- *Muscle aches and fatigue*
- *Runny nose*
- *Sneezing*
- *Sore throat*
- *Watery eyes*
- *Loss of appetite*
- *Nausea and vomiting*
- *Diarrhea*

If you or your child are sick and do not improve, contact your health care provider.

Many viruses are commonly active at this time of year, for example norovirus and influenza (flu). Both viruses are very contagious and can be spread by contact with contaminated surfaces, such as door knobs or eating utensils. For more information, read the norovirus and flu fact sheets online at the following links:

[*Norovirus fact sheet*](#)

[*Flu fact sheet*](#)

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.

ONLINE PAYMENTS COMING SOON!

Our school will soon be accepting online payments through School Cash Online. School related expenses such as hot lunches, field trips and fundraisers will be online soon for you to make payment. Sign up information was sent home in your child's report card on Feb. 18.

Investment in Education

Thank you to our school community for its generous donations through the Investment in Education program. Funds raised have been allocated to support the Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School Music, Phys Ed, Library, Literacy and Technology programs that will benefit all students in all divisions. Thank you for your role in enriching the education of all children at Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS through these generous donations to support programming through the School Improvement Plan!

Class Placements 2016 for Grades 2 to 8

As our school begins the process of organizing classes for September, it is important for parents to understand the procedure used in student placement decisions. The ultimate goal in all our efforts at Sir Wilfrid Laurier P.S. is to enhance student learning. We attempt to place students in the most positive learning environment possible, given each pupil's skills, knowledge, attitude and work and social habits. Classes at each level are formed using the following criteria:

- class sizes consistent with Ministry and Board guidelines;
- gender balance in each class;
- a range of performance levels within each class;
- matching pupil learning styles with teaching;
- strategies wherever possible;
- promoting positive social relationships.

Please be aware that staffing remains unclear at this point due to enrolment fluctuations, and teacher transfers and leaves. As we get closer towards the end of the school year, decisions will gain focus. Requests for specific teachers cannot be accommodated and we ask your cooperation in this process.

All schools are encouraged and expected to put into place flexible organizations that will avoid possible reorganizations at a later date lessening the risk of disruption for students.

During the months of May and June, class organization for the following year will begin. Our main objective is to create classes which will provide the optimum learning environment for everyone. Student placement is based on considerations such as a child's capabilities, gender, work habits, social skills, and behaviour.

Our teachers have the benefit of knowing the children with whom they are currently working, and recognize their students' learning styles. The teachers' professional decisions are both respected and relied upon. We appreciate that parents have valuable information to share with us too. If you have suggestions or input which will help staff make an appropriate grade placement, please write a note to your child's teacher **before Friday, May 1**. Rather than requesting a particular teacher, please indicate the learning style or classroom structure which would be most appropriate for your child. When teachers meet to create new class lists, this information will be considered. Requests will only be accommodated where placement will enhance student learning.

End of Day Parent Pick Up Reminders

Sir Wilfrid P.S. Student Drop-Off Routine for 2015-2016

Our student drop-off routine beginning on Tuesday, September 8 remains the same as this year at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School.

Morning Routines (unchanged):

- Only school buses and school taxi/vans use the 'Bus' lane; parents drop off in the Kiss and Ride only or park on the street and use the crosswalk; there is no parking in the Kiss and Ride.
- Cars are not to enter school property using the bus lane off Stoney Hill.
- Students do not get dropped off in the bus lane off Stoney Hill
- Parents enter the Kiss and Ride lane and drop off children to a staff member supervisor at the Kiss and Ride.
- Parents who park on the street use the crosswalks that are provided.
- After dropping off children in the Kiss and Ride, cars drive through the parking lot, and exit onto Hazelton Avenue.
- Cars to give buses the right of way when exiting the 'Bus' lane.
- Parents are encouraged to park on a neighbouring street and use the crosswalks.
- All students go to the playground prior to the 8:25a.m. entry bell.
- After the 8:25 a.m. entry bell, students enter through the front doors.

Dismissal Routines at Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS (unchanged):

- Buses will be given the right of way leaving the 'Bus' lane (south east side of the school).
- Students and parents are to use the two crosswalks to cross the bus lane.
- Three parking spots have been designated for the Upper Canada Child Care Staff at the end of the day.
- Parents wait for children outside the building at a pre-arranged pick up point (door near the Kiss 'n Ride).
- Cars do not park, double park or wait in the Kiss 'n Ride.

Snow Valley Feb 24 rescheduled to March 23

The Feb 24 Snow Valley Day, cancelled due to inclement weather and bus cancellation, has been rescheduled to Wed March 23.

Lost and Found

Please remind your children to check for such missing items as clothing, shoes, and back packs. Labeling your children's belongings helps us reunite children and lost items.

Valuable items such as watches, rings, and keys are stored in the office for safe-keeping. Unclaimed items will be donated to a local charity.

School Improvement Plan: Literacy and Numeracy

Grade 8 Graduation

The Grade 8 graduation event will take place this year on Monday, June 27 with the ceremony, group picture, dinner and dance occurring at Le Parc located at 8432 Leslie St, Thornhill. Our staff Graduation Committee expects to meet in the spring to discuss and finalize plans. More information will follow in early June.

EQAO Testing Preparation

The Grade 3 and Grade 6 Assessments of Reading, Writing, and Mathematics are conducted annually in every publicly funded Ontario elementary school under the auspices of the province's Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). The assessments are based on the Ontario Curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 and measure how well students have met the provincial expectations in reading, writing, and mathematics. Students' work is marked according to four levels of achievement based on the expectations in the provincial curriculum. In the Ontario Curriculum, Level 3 represents the expected standard for Grades 3 and 6, and identifies a high level of achievement of the expectations. Teams of specially trained classroom teachers and administrators mark the work the students produce during the assessment.

Our teachers are preparing students for these assessments, despite realizing that student learning is accumulative from each grade. We request parents' support in instilling the importance of always doing one's best in their children. The EQAO testing is not meant to be a stressful situation for students, but we do expect them to take the assessment seriously and put forth their best efforts. **This year the EQAO assessments will take place between May 25 and June 8 2016 (inclusive).** Details will follow regarding specific dates for Grades 3 and 6 students' Language and Mathematics assessments. French Immersion Grade 3 students will take only the Mathematics portion of the assessment (administered in French). Grade 3 English Track students

will participate in both the Language and Mathematics assessments. Grade 6 students will participate in both the Language and Mathematics assessments. These will be administered in English.

Please contact the school if you have any questions regarding the EQAO assessments.

Whenever possible, we ask that parents not schedule appointments during the testing period. It is very important that your child be in school during EQAO testing. Please ensure that your child is well rested during this period and attends punctually. Thank you.

EQAO achievement results and questionnaire data is used at our school in the following ways:

- to identify how well students are meeting the expectations in the curriculum
- to communicate with parents about student achievement
- to communicate with teachers about student achievement and to compare with other data used for student achievement
- to pinpoint where resources are needed
- to support the acquisition of resources and identify where resources are needed
- to change pedagogical resources (instructional methods or manuals, textbooks, etc.)
- to support a change in teaching practices
- for public accountability
- to identify program strengths and areas for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics
- to guide school improvement initiatives for reading, writing and mathematics
- to determine where improvements have occurred in the reading, writing and mathematics programs

Grade 7 and 8 Summer School Reinforcement

The following summer school programs will be offered this summer for Grade 7 and 8 students: Language and/or Math Reinforcement program for students who do not have an IEP or an ELL designation, Language and/or Math Reinforcement program for students who have an academic IEP, ELL full-day Language program for students who are ELL Stage 1 or 2 learners. Focus is on reading, writing and speaking. The Grade 7 and 8 Summer School Reinforcement program runs during the month of July. Attendance for the entire program is required. Full days programs will have a lunch break from 11:45 a.m. to 12:25 p.m. Bussing is provided at the beginning of the day and end of day only. In Markham, the program runs at Bur Oak SS and Markville SS. The deadline for application is in early March. More information will be available from the office and Grade 8 homeroom teachers. For more information, contact Community and International Education Services at 905 884 3434 or 1 877 280 8180. The time and hours of the program are as follows:

Grade 7 and 8 Program	Time
Reinforcement English Language (a.m.)	9:00 – 11:45 (15 min break)
Reinforcement Math (p.m.)	12:25 – 3:10 (15 min break)
Reinforcement English Language with an IEP (a.m.)	9:00 – 11:45 (15 min break)
Reinforcement Math with an IEP (p.m.)	12:25 – 3:10 (15 min break)
ELL – English Language Learners Stage 1 or 2 (full day)	9:00 – 3:10 (2 - 15 min break)

2016 Summer Institute Program

The York Region District School Board's Summer Institute is a program that offers academic, recreational and athletic programs and activities with intentional links to the Ontario Curriculum for children and youth from Kindergarten to Grade 8. Weekly sessions are offered at a number of locations in July. For more information please visit www.yrds.edu.on.ca or e-mail performanceplus.si@yrdsb.edu.on.ca.

Summer Camps/Visit to France or Quebec

Parents often look for opportunities for their children to practise their French skills during the summer months. Canadian Parents for French (CPF) offers summer camps in French. Interested parents may contact Canadian Parents for French at: 905 366-1012 (ext. 1); 1 800 667-0594; fax 905 625-5570; or www.cpfont.on.ca.

School Improvement Plan: Modern Learning

Grade 3 Gifted Screening

Grade 3 Gifted Screening was administered to all Grade 3 students during the first two weeks of December. Parents of children who met the criteria to be eligible for identification were contacted by letter during the week of February 2 2016. Parents will be informed of the results of stage 3 testing during the week of Feb 29.

Health and Physical Education Curriculum

Attached are links to resources for parents posted on the YRDSB Board website that pertain to the revised Health and Physical Education Curriculum: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/AboutUs/Departments/CIS/Pages/Revised-Health-and-Physical-Education-Curriculum.aspx>. Resources include the Health and Physical Education Curriculum 2015 and parent's guides for each grade level.

Parent's guides for each grade level will be sent home hard copy by the office after March Break.

Celebrating Multiculturalism

The following events may be celebrated by students at Sir Wilfrid Laurier in March and April:

BAHA'I FAITH: March 2 to 20: **The 19-Day Feast** is observed annually, where people abstain from food and drink from sunrise until sunset each day.

March 21: **Naw Ruz** is the Baha'I New Year which is celebrated on the first day of spring. Work and academics are suspended on this day.

April 21: **Ridvan**. Baha'u'llah, the founder of the Baha'i Faith, declared his mission as the most recent messenger of God.

BUDDHISM: March 20: **Spring Ohigon** is a time to listen to the teachings of the Buddha and to meditate on the perfection of enlightenment.

April 13/14: **Saka** (New Year's Day) is both a religious and cultural celebration. This day is both a religious and cultural celebration.

CHRISTIANITY:

March 20: **Palm Sunday**, the Sunday before Easter, is the beginning of the Holy Week celebrating Jesus' entry into Jerusalem (Eastern and Western calendars).

March 24: **Maundy Thursday** (Holy Thursday) is the commemoration of the institution of the Lord's Supper (Western calendar).

March 25: **Good Friday** commemorates Jesus' death by crucifixion. On the Eastern Calendar, Holy Friday commemorates the passion of Jesus Christ and focus on his burial.

March 27: **Easter Sunday** celebrates the resurrection of Christ. It is the most important festival in the Christian year. This celebration is also celebrated on April 4 on the Eastern calendar.

April 24: **Palm Sunday**, the Sunday before Easter (Eastern Calendar).

April 29: **Holy Friday** (Eastern) commemorates the passion of Jesus Christ, i.e. his submission to death by crucifixion. The Eastern churches focus on his burial.

May 1: **Easter Sunday** in the Orthodox churches. The church calendar year begins with Pascha (Eastern Calendar).

EARTH DAY: April 22 is a day for group or individual action devoted to helping the environment.

HINDUISM: March 23: **Holi** is a colourful spring festival observed widely in Hindu communities around the world. The myths, customs and rituals associated with Holi vary considerably from place to place.

April 14: **Chaitra New Year:**. The first day of the Solar year is an agricultural festival celebrating the harvest. This is also celebrated as the Tamil New Year, Varusha Pirappu, Vishu, Ugadi, Rongali Bihu and Naba Barsha..

April 15: **Ramanavami**. On this day Lord Rama the 7th incarnation of Lord Vishnu is said to have been born.

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION: March 21: This is the anniversary of the 1960 Sharpeville, South Africa, massacre. Canadian Heritage marks this day with an anti-racist campaign. (www.march21.com)

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY: March 8: This is the anniversary of the first protest march against working conditions for women textile workers in New York City in 1857.

JAINISM: April 19: **Mahavira Jayanti** is the celebration of the birthday of Lord mahavira (meaning the Great Hero) of Jina (the Conqueror).

JUDAISM: Apr 23-30: **Pesach (Passover)** is a "Festival of Freedom" that commemorates the exodus of the Jews from slavery in Egypt. Symbolic foods, such as matzo, are eaten and leavened products are prohibited. First Seder is on the evening of April 3rd. The second and last two days of Pesach are also observed as full holy days by people of Jewish faith.

SIKHISM: March 14 celebrates the **Sikh New Year's Day**. This is the year 543.

April 14: **Vaisakhi**. This day celebrates the founding of the Khalsa order (Sikh) in 1699 C.E. by Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Many Sikhs choose to be baptized into the Khalsa Panth (Brotherhood of the Pure) on this day. Also on this day, male Khalsa Sikhs are named Singh (lion), female Khalsa Sikhs are named Kau (princess). It is the most important holy day of the year for Sikhs.

ZOROASTRIANISM: March 17: **Ghambar Hamaspathmaedem** celebrates the creation of human beings.

March 21: **Naw Ruz** celebrates New Year's Day in Fasli calendars (Zoroastrianism). This is the first day of the Zoroastrian and Persian year. It symbolizes the renewal of the world after winter.

March 28: **Birthday of the Prophet Zarathustra**, the founder of the Zoroastrian faith.

School Improvement Plan: Mental Health

School Council News on Pro Grant

The School Council is organizing a Parent Reaching Out Evening hosted by Mentorship by Chosen on Tues., June 21 at 7:00 p.m.. Social Networking Safety speaker, Paul Davis has over 25 years of IT experience to share and will speak with students during the day and follow up with a session in the evening for all parents. He will provide a Common Sense Approach to dealing with the technology our kids/young teens have including, Twitter/Instagram/Facebook, Cyber-Bullying, Hand Held Devices, Texting, and Legal Matters as well as demonstrating how easily your account can be compromised. To date, Paul has reached over 250,000 students in Canada alone. Cyber-bullying has become a serious concern in our children's world. We seem to be hearing more and more in the media about children attacking children via social media, leading to low self-esteem, depression and sometimes suicide. Paul understands what they do, and how they do it – online. More information will follow from the School Council. Tickets will be required due to seating capacity in the air conditioned Library.

Summer Sports Clubs and Camps

Local sports clubs, supported by the School Board, often provide flyers with information for parents about their programs. Flyers are often displayed for parents in the stand between the doors in the front foyer.

And finally...

We wish you a safe and fun filled March Break with your children.

Please watch for the May/June issue of the Laurier Link posted on the school website, www.sirwilfridlaurier.ps.yrdsb.edu.on.ca on Monday, April 25, 2016.

Mme Finn and Mme Gravill



