

Laurier Link

November and December 2015

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
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Superintendent: 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

November and December 2015

Upcoming events are listed on the master calendar on the school website accessible by clicking on or cutting and pasting following this link:

For the month of November: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/sirwilfridlaurier.ps/NewsEvents/Pages/School-Calendar.aspx>

For the month of December: <http://www.yrdsb.ca/schools/sirwilfridlaurier.ps/NewsEvents/Pages/School-Calendar.aspx>

Message from School Trustee

Welcome back to another school year.

I am happy to extend a warm welcome to our returning students and families and those who are new to our Board. I am the trustee for your child's school and your representative on the York Region District School Board of Trustees.

I am looking forward to continuing my work to ensure that all YRDSB students receive a high-quality education within safe, caring and inclusive learning environments.

In the coming year, trustees will continue to focus on the priorities that we set out in our Multi-Year Plan: student achievement and well-being, the delivery of effective and sustainable educational programs and the responsible stewardship of Board resources.

We know that partnerships with families are essential to achieving this goal. Good schools become better schools when they are connected to parents and families.

I hope that you will find positive and meaningful ways to engage with your child's school over the course of the year.

There will be many events and activities to look forward to throughout the year and many opportunities across the Region that support parent engagement.

2015-16 promises to be an exciting year. All the best for the upcoming school year!

School Improvement Plan: Literacy and Numeracy

Gr 7 to 10 Homework Help

Free online Math Tutoring is available for students in Grades 7 to 10 through twitter (@MathHWH) and facebook (fb.com/MathHWH). Parents can sign up for a free guest account to get resources and tools 24/7 including math videos, interactive exercises and activities, a scientific calculator and more. Parents can register at Ontario.ca/HomeworkHelp.

Tutoring programs for students

We know that learning continues outside the classroom and that students and parents need access to resources.

The Ontario government and its partners offer tutoring services for students to help them succeed.

Ask a Teacher

The Independent Learning Centre's Ask a Teacher is free online tutoring by certified Ontario teachers for all Ontario high school students. Support in English, math and science for Grades 9 to 12 is available in a live, anonymous and online format from Sunday to Thursday, 5:30 p.m. EST to 9:30 p.m. EST.

Homework Help

Homework Help is free, real-time math tutoring by certified Ontario teachers available to students in Grades 7 to 10 in all English-language school boards. Students have access to live, interactive online math help funded by the Ministry of Education. This program is password protected and not available to the general public.

Summer Reading Challenge, 2015

We had a large number of students participate in the Summer Reading Challenge. It was wonderful to see all of the reading that took place during the summer months. Before the end of the last school year, families were provided with recommended reading lists. However, students' personal interests and choices in reading were also honoured in order to maintain student engagement and support our school's work around positive climates for learning. We look forward to handing out certificates and having an opportunity to congratulate these students. The Summer Reading Program will be offered again in 2016 and we are excited to see the continued enthusiasm for reading! Bravo!

Word Q

Word Q v. 3 for Windows and Mac is software that is licensed by the Ministry of Education in English and French for all Ontario's publicly funded educational institutions for Grades 3 – 10. It is available for student use at home and can be downloaded. Should you wish to download Word Q for your child to use at home, contact Mme Rock, Mme Gravill or Mme Finn for more information.

School Improvement Plan: Programs and Pathways

Grade 8 to 9 Open Houses and Application Deadlines

Enclosed is a summary of information regarding high school in the public system, including dates of information sessions, application deadlines and how to access applications. This information was previously shared with parents of Grade 8 students in the form of a letter sent home the week of October 19.

<i>Secondary School</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>
<i>Arts Alexander Mackenzie@The Richmond Hill Performance Centre</i>	<i>Oct 21</i>	<i>7:00</i>
<i>Bill Crothers SS</i>	<i>Oct 13</i>	<i>7:00</i>
<i>Arts Unionville@Flato Markham Theatre</i>	<i>Nov 3</i>	<i>7:00</i>
<i>Pierre E Trudeau SS</i>	<i>Nov 19</i>	<i>7:00</i>
<i>Richmond Green SS</i>	<i>Nov 17</i>	<i>6:30</i>
<i>Unionville HS</i>	<i>Jan 14</i>	<i>6:00</i>

School Improvement Plan: Culture, Caring and Community

It's time to remind children about being safe in our community.

With the start of another school year, 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.

Positive Climates for Learning: **Safety Week: Sept 28 – Oct 02**

All York Region schools recognized Safety Week during the week of Sept. 28 – Oct 02. At Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS, the following activities were part of Safety Week:

- i) Our second of three fall fire drills; one with the Markham Fire Department
- ii) Our first of two lockdown drills
- iii) One hold and secure drill
- iv) Follow up to the Health and Safety Inspection conducted on October 9
- v) Staff Health and Safety training
- vi) Designated Staff First Aid Recertification
- vii) Parent Information on Health and Safety posted on the school website
- viii) Bus Evacuation on October 15 and 16
- ix) Welcome Back Assembly on Sept 8

Health and Safety: Sabrina's Law

Anaphylaxis is a severe, life threatening allergic reaction. Within seconds, symptoms such as itching, hives, tingling of the mouth and even death (due to difficulty breathing and low blood pressure) can occur. Immediate recognition and treatment are essential. Under the new legislation, Sabrina's Law, parents are obliged to:

1. Supply information on life-threatening allergies for their child,
2. Keep school informed with up-to-date information for their child's file,
3. Provide consent for the school administrators and employees to administer an Epi-Pen in response to an anaphylactic reaction and
4. Provide up-to-date Epi-Pens to their child's school.

Parents are asked to avoid sending foods which include peanuts/peanut products to school. Children who have epi-pens are required to wear them at all times. We appreciate your support.

Health and Safety: Hepatitis B / Meningitis / HPV Immunization

Grade 7 students received immunization against Hepatitis B and Meningitis on October 29 at which time the HPV vaccine was administered to participating Grade 8 girls. Information and consent sheets were mailed by Public Health over the summer and parents were to mail them back directly to Public Health. The second and third Immunization Clinics will be administered on January 19 and May 2. These dates are on the school website with details.

Health and Safety: Have a Health Care Question?

Do you have a health care question regarding your child, such as:

- Does my child need the Hep B vaccine?
- Can one go to school with chicken pox?
- When should I talk to my child about sex?

- Should my child have a flu shot?

For health-related information visit the York Region Health Services Health Connection at www.york.ca, or call 1 800 361-5653, Monday through Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. If you leave a message after hours staff will respond to your call within the next business day.

Positive Climates for Learning: Character Matters

In September, students discussed the Character Matters attribute of **Respect**. During October, our focus was on **Responsibility**. During November, our focus will be on **Courage**. Staff will encourage students to:

- Face challenges directly
- Seek help from others when necessary
- Do the right thing even when it may be unpopular
- Recognize risks and danger
- Not take unwise risks to gain the approval of others
- Not cave into peer pressure
- Forgive, and
- Admit their mistakes.

During December, our focus will be on **Empathy**. Staff will encourage students to:

- Strive to sense and appreciate the emotions of others
- Demonstrate appreciation and concern for the feelings of others
- Understand issues from others' perspectives even though they may not agree with them personally.

Family discussions at home supporting these qualities are appreciated.

Positive Climates for Learning: Kids Help Phone

The 'Kids Help Phone' is a free, anonymous confidential phone and web counseling and referral service for children of all ages. Students will be provided with 'Kids Help Phone' brochures, and for Grades 7 and 8 students, with wallet cards. The 'Kids Help Phone' is available to students 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at 1 800 668 6868 or kidshelpphone.ca. Professional counselors at 'Kids Help Phone' work as partners with students who contact the service. The counselors remain non-judgmental, always listen and convey a sense of empathy and compassion. They remain confident and stable and help the young person mitigate the negative effects of his/her situation in an effort to improve it. 'Kids Help Phone' provides a place for students to turn when they need professional help with questions and concerns about issues such as relationships, sex, drugs, bullying, family, school and more.

Positive Climates for Learning: Police and Board Protocol

In October, elementary and secondary administrators in the York Region District School Board participated in training on the revised Police and Board Protocol which outlines collaborative processes that occur between the school board and police to ensure public safety. Some highlights are:

The following activity **must** be reported forthwith to the police, regardless of the age of the student:

- Criminal harassment
- Deaths on school property
- Extortion
- Gang-related incidents
- Hate and/or bias-motivated incident
- Possession or trafficking in drugs
- Possession or use of weapons
- Physical assaults causing bodily harm requiring medical attention
- Robbery
- Sexual offences
- Threatened or actual violence occurring within an intimate relationship
- Threats of serious physical injury, including cyber-related incidents, social networking, instant messaging, text messaging, e-mail, etc.

The following activities **may** be reported to the police:

- Being under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs
- Giving alcohol to a minor
- Suicide threats
- Trespassing
- Threats of violence
- Worrisome behaviour

- Vandalism
- Other instances deemed to require police involvement

Area and Regional Cross Country

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School is very proud of the 124 Grade 4-8 students who trained almost every day in September for the Cross Country Area Meet held at Milliken Mills Park. 30 students attending Regionals at Bruce's Mill. Congratulations to our Cross Country Team on a great season.

Celebrating Multiculturalism

The following events will be celebrated by students at Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School in November and December:

BAHA'I FAITH: November 12: **The Birth of Baha'u'llah:** Baha'u'llah was born Mizra Husayn Ali into one of the leading noble families of Persia in 1817 C.E. His name is a title in Arabic meaning "the Glory of God." He is the founder of the Baha'i faith. Work and academic studies are suspended on this day.

November 26: **The Day of the Covenant:** The eldest and appointed successor of Baha'u'llah Abdu'l-Baha is referred to as the "Centre of the Covenant." The covenant was established by Baha'u'llah to safeguard the unity of the Baha'i community. It was Abdu'l-Baha's wish that the Covenant be celebrated rather than his own birth date.

November 28: **Ascension of Abdu'l-Baha:** After years of serving both his father and the growing Baha'l community, Abdu'l-Baha passed away in Haifa Israel in 1921 C.E.

CHRISTIANITY: November 1: **All Saints Day** is observed as a special day in many Christian churches.

November 30: **The First Sunday of Advent** begins preparations for Christmas. In homes and churches, Christians set out special candle holders or Advent wreaths (Western).

December 25. **Christmas** (Western calendar) celebrates the birth of Jesus about 2000 years ago in Bethlehem. Christians believe that Jesus of Nazareth is the son of God, and accept him as their Saviour and Lord. In many families, Christmas Eve is celebrated with big dinners, visiting and carol-singing, often followed by midnight church services.

ISLAM: November 3: **Ashura** falls on the 10th day of Muharram. The 10th day commemorates the martyrdom of Hussein, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad (pbuh).

JAINISM: December 2: **Maun-agiyaras** is a day of fasting, silence and meditation.

JUDAISM: December 17 to 24: **Chanukah** (Festival of Lights) which celebrates religious freedom by commemorating the victory of the Jew over Antiochus who tried to outlaw the practice of Judaism. Starting on the eve of December 16, candles are lit in increasing numbers for eight nights in a "Chanukiah", a special candelabrum containing nine candles.

KWANZAA: December 26: **Kwanzaa** named after the Swahili word for "first fruits" is a seven day cultural celebration initiated by African Americans starting on December 26th. Each day a candle is lit and placed in a seven-cup candelabrum called a kinara that sits on a straw mat adorned with fruit and vegetables. The participants discuss the principles or Nguzo Saba of Kwanzaa: unity, self-determination, collective responsibility, cooperative economics, purpose, creativity and faith. On the final night of the celebration, friends and relatives gather for a feast known as Karamu.

SIKHISM: November 6: **Birthday of Guru Nanak Dev Ji.** The founder of the Sikh faith was born in 1469 C.E.

November 24: **Martyrdom of Guru Tegh Bahadar Ji.** The Guru was executed in 1675 C.E. by a Mughal emperor. Sikhs believe that he gave his life to save the Hindu faith and religious liberty.

ZOROASTRIANISM: December 26: **Death of Prophet Zarathustra** who was the founder of the Zoroastrian faith. His dates are uncertain but Westerners believe he lived in the first or the second millennium B.C.E.

Hallowe'en is Coming

The YRDSB's **Safe School Policy** strictly prohibits weapons and replica weapons on school property. We do not make a distinction according to how realistic a replica may appear. Keep this in mind as you help your child select a Hallowe'en costume, and make sure that all toy weapons (i.e. plastic swords, staff, whip, spear, gun, rifle, knife) are kept at home. Please remember that Sir Wilfrid Laurier Public School is a peanut/nut free school and we are promoting healthy eating.

The following tips for a safe and fun Hallowe'en are from the York Regional Police:

- Plan for costumes that are bright and reflective. Make sure costumes are short enough to prevent tripping, entanglement or contact with flame.
- Add reflective tape to costumes and trick-or-treat bags for greater visibility.
- Consider using face paint or make-up rather than a mask so vision is not impaired; no masks at school.
- Remove any masks before crossing a street.
- Purchase costumes and accessories that are flame resistant.
- Use flashlights with fresh batteries for all children and their escorts. This is also a good time to replace the batteries in home smoke detectors.
- Teach your children how to stop, drop and roll should their clothing catch fire.
- Eliminate tripping hazards on your property.
- Feed your children a good, healthy meal before they go out. This will discourage them from filling up on Hallowe'en treats that have not yet been checked.

- A parent or responsible adult should always accompany young children on their rounds. Parents should know the route that older children are going to take.
- Stay in a group, walk slowly and communicate where you are going.
- Remain on well-lit streets and use sidewalks.
- If no sidewalks are available, walk facing traffic and as far from traffic as possible.
- Never cut across yards; shrubs may trip you.
- Obey all traffic and pedestrian laws. Do not assume that drivers can see you.
- Eat treats only checked by a trusted adult.
- Never enter a stranger's home/car.

After Trick-or-Treating:

- Sort and check candy upon arrival home. Although tampering is rare, throw away any suspicious or unwrapped items.
- Remove items that cause choking, especially in younger children, or treats that can remove dental work.

The York Regional Police wish the residents of York Region a safe and happy Hallowe'en. By working together, children can be provided a memorable and safe Hallowe'en. For more information, contact www.police.york.on.ca.

Lost and Found

Lost items are placed in our Lost and Found box, situated in the front foyer. Students and parents are encouraged to check the Lost and Found box to claim lost articles and clothing. Small, valuable items such as watches, keys, and glasses, are kept in the office until claimed.

Student Engagement: Student Council/Conseil d'Elèves

The following students are the class reps for Student Council (two per class):

Grade 2: Wyatt H, Kristen K, Amy A, Nathan J, Naomi C, Natalie A, Carina C, Matthew H, David L, Sophia H, Emily S, Ella Z, Joshua R, Petra T

Grade 3: Reann L, Areez H, Ruffin H, Grace S, Lia P, Adam A, David Z, Chloe L, Charman L, Michael L, Kaitlyn T, Mitchell T, Felice Z, Everett W, Koen C, Pam L

Grade 4: Noella O, Michael C, Avery C, Sienna S, Sadie B, Pedram T, Sarah P, Rosalyn D

Grade 5: Jed M, Nia C, Justine J, Victor L, Arjun B, Nichole T, Charlie M, Catherine V

Grade 6: Adam P, Megan T, Natalie S, Tharin S/Jacob S, Sohun P, Kate M, Amy S, Jason W

Grade 7: Gabrielle T, Jadyn P/Zaki Dhanani, Kirsten D, Rachel C

Grade 8: Daniella F, Carina S, Harrison G, Dylan K, Subakarie M

Plans are well underway for student-led activities that will provide positive role modeling and leadership from our very capable student leaders, all part of our positive climate for learning, starting with the Grade 6 to 8 school dance.

Parent Engagement: School Council

Our first School Council Meeting of the 2015-16 school year was held on **Wednesday, October 7, at 7:00 p.m.** in the school library. The School Council is comprised of school administration, teaching staff, support staff and parents and meets four to five times a year (Oct 7, Nov 25, Feb 3, April 6 and May 25). It serves as an important advisory support in the operation of the school. It provides an opportunity for parents to keep informed on current issues in education and to provide input to the school administration on issues of concern in the community. The members of the School Council represent the interests of parents in the school; not those of special interest groups.

- Thank you to those who submitted nomination forms. An election was not required this year. The members of the 2015-16 School Council are: The 2015-16 members of the School Council are: Houri Awedikian (Co-Chair), Shalini Bhardwaj, Alex Cheung (Co-Treasurer), Raymond Cheung, Felix Cheong, Elisa Lau, Yifu Li (Co-Treasurer), Juliann Ng (Co-Chair), Nancy Tye (Community Member), Diana Yau (Secretary), admin, teaching staff rep, non-teaching staff rep. Ordering of Wish List items including Computer Cost Sharing, is currently on hold due to labour sanctions.

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The members of the executive of this year's School Council are:

Co-Chairs: Mrs. Houri Awedikian and Mrs. Juliann Ng

Secretary: Diana Yau

Co-Treasurer: Mrs. Yifu Li and Alex Cheung

- Minutes of School Council meetings are available to parents by means of the school website. Should parents wish to participate on the following sub-committees, please e-mail the School Council at sir.wilfrid.laurier.ps@sc.yrdsb.edu.on.ca : Book of Forms, Investment in Education, Healthy Eating, Positive Climate for Learning/Safe Schools, Pizza, Lunch Lady, Fun Lunches, Turkey Hot Dog Lunch, Sub Lunches, Communication, Fun Fair (date is Thursday, June 2), Pro Grant, Other Grants.

Volunteers

Volunteers are invaluable at Sir Wilfrid Laurier P.S. Thank you to those parents who have responded to the SWL Volunteer Form sent home on Sept 8 indicating they will volunteer their time and energy in the school to help teachers, students, and office staff. Volunteers will be contacted to complete the required Confidentiality Agreement and Volunteer Vulnerable Sector Screening. Thank you!

Warm Clothing

As the weather conditions change, parents are reminded to send their children to school with appropriate outerwear. Layers of clothing are ideal for variable conditions during the fall. All children go outside for recesses each day for 30 minutes at morning recess, and 35 minutes at lunch recess (weather permitting), so it is very important that they are dressed appropriately. Parents of younger children may want to send in spare clothing (pants and socks are often needed) in a labeled bag for those wet, slushy, snowy days ahead.

Remembrance Day

On November 11, the students and staff of Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS will be pausing along with millions of other students across our nation, to remember and give thanks. Staff and students will be honouring the men and women who fought and died to preserve our freedoms and pass on the heritage of peace which we enjoy in this country. Parents are welcome to join us at 9:40 a.m. for the Primary Assembly (Grade 2 and 3) or at 10:40 for the Junior/Intermediate (Grade 4 to 8) Assembly in the gym. Students are welcome to wear their Brownie, Girl Guide, Beaver, Cubs, Scout or cadet uniform that day or part of the day.

Community Outreach: Terry Fox Campaign

“Back in 1980, Terry Fox could never have imagined how magnificent Canadians would ‘keep going’ after his untimely death.” On behalf of Sir Wilfrid Laurier PS and The Terry Fox Foundation, we are grateful for the wonderful support of the community. The school’s Terry Fox Run/Walk was held on Friday, Sept 25 . Allez, Laurier!

*Thank you for a great September and October!
Have a great November and December!
Enjoy the holiday season.*

Mme Gravill and Mme Finn