

Welcome Letter from SDSS Administration Team (grades 10-12)

Dear Families,

Welcome! We are so excited to be welcoming students to another school year. We are looking forward to a fantastic year ahead! **As a reminder, grade 9s and community classes begin school on Tuesday, September 3rd and all other students begin on Wednesday, September 4th.** The cafeteria will be open.

We have a dedicated staff with a strong commitment to student learning, achievement and well-being. We are committed to supporting our students' transition back to school and to providing a learning environment where everyone feels safe, valued, welcome and respected.

There are some important things we want to share at the start of the school year:

- This **start-up package** includes important information about our school, and I encourage you to review it.
- The [Guide to the School Year](https://www2.yrdsb.ca/school-year-guide) has been moved online. We encourage families to review this webpage as it includes important information you may need to access throughout the school year. You can use the translation feature on the website to translate this content. It is available at <https://www2.yrdsb.ca/school-year-guide>.
- Each year we ask families to complete **important start-up forms**. You will receive an email in the coming weeks with a link to the online forms. Please review and complete the forms. If you prefer to receive and complete a paper copy, please let us know.

Please know that we are here to support your child and would ask that you reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

Mr. Press-- student alpha surnames A-L

Ms. Thom -- student alpha surnames M-Z

Student timetables will become visible in Teachassist at the end of this week. Students will also be emailed their timetable to their GAPPS account. Due to the limited space available in most courses, requests for changes will only be considered for exceptional cases. Where changes are needed, students will need to complete the google form provided by guidance in early September. Students must follow their assigned timetable unless Guidance notifies them. Please find here a link to the [SDSS Guidance Page](#)-- which will be updated soon to reflect the new school year.

Please mark the following dates on your calendar:

- September 3--grade 9 and community classes photo day
- September 6--photo day grades 10-12 (retakes October 7)
- September 12 - Grade 9 Family Night (grade 9 families only)
- September 23 -- School Council Meeting
- October 24 - Parent / Teacher Interviews

We value the relationship and partnership we have with families, and look forward to speaking and working with you in the months ahead. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions. We welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

In order to remain informed of our school news, please read the weekly Spartan Speaks, our [school website](#) and follow us on Instagram @Stouffvilledss. You can also find updated information about the



Board at www.yrdsb.ca, Twitter @YRDSB, Instagram @yrdsb.schools, or the Board podcast TuneIn YRDSB wherever you listen to podcasts.

We look forward to working with you this year in support of your child.

Sincerely

Dawn Laliberte
Principal

Neil Press
Vice-Principal

Jennifer Thom
Vice-Principal

Welcome Letter from SDSS Administration Team (grade 9s)

Dear Families and Students:

Welcome to Stouffville District Secondary School! The information below highlights numerous important elements of the SDSS schedule and program for you to be aware of as you prepare for high school and the attached Start Up package is provided to you to assist you in familiarizing yourself with our school. We ask that you take time to read through it with your child.

We have a dedicated staff with a strong commitment to student learning, achievement and well-being. We are committed to supporting our students' transition back to school and to providing a learning environment where everyone feels safe, valued, welcome and respected.

There are some important things we want to share at the start of the school year:

- This **start-up package** includes important information about our school, and I encourage you to review it
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- Each year we ask families to complete **important start-up forms**. You will receive an email in the coming weeks with a link to the online forms. Please review and complete the forms. If you prefer to receive and complete a paper copy, please let us know.

Student timetables will become visible in Teachassist at the end of this week. Students will also be emailed their timetable to their GAPPS account and grade 9s will receive a paper copy on the first day of school. Due to the limited space available in most courses, requests for changes will only be considered for exceptional cases. Where changes are needed, students will need to complete the google form provided by guidance in early September. Students must follow their assigned timetable unless Guidance notifies them. Please find here a link to the [SDSS Guidance Page](#)-- which will be updated soon to reflect the new school year.

Please know that we are here to support your child and would ask that you reach out to us if you have any questions or concerns.

Mr. Press – student alpha surnames A-L

Ms. Thom – student alpha surnames M-Z

GRADE 9 ORIENTATION DAY – TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 3

- Tuesday Sept 3 is the first day of school for Grade 9 and Community Class students **only**. Students will:
 - meet in the GYM at 9:20 for an opening energizer and welcome assembly
 - be introduced to their HomeRoom Teacher
 - complete a school tour to get to know the building

- move through their timetable (shortened periods) to meet their teachers and classmates
- **have their picture taken during period 2 (yearbook and student card)**
- receive a ticket for an ice-cream at lunch time (regular lunch options include bringing a bagged lunch or going home/out. At this time the cafeteria will not be open).
- Attend the annual safe schools assembly
- The cafeteria will be open.
- **Parents/guardians are invited to join in the gym at 9:20 and then attend a “Welcome to High School” session in the library (9:45 - 10:45) while students participate in separate activities.**

Grade 9 Families Night--Thursday, September 12, 2024

We're pleased to invite families of grade 9s to join us on September 14 for a “Welcome to High School” session hosted in the library starting at 7:00 pm (This will be the *same* information shared on Sept. 5).

Grade 9 Team Building Day at Camp Green Acres--Thursday, Sept. 12

To welcome and encourage a strong sense of community amongst our grade 9's, SDSS's newest Spartans are invited to the ultimate orientation experience: *The Spartan Games*, hosted at Camp Green Acres in Markham. Students will participate in various team and leadership building activities led by SDSS student mentors and camp staff. Following the Challenge by Choice model, students are encouraged to participate in all activities to their personal comfort and challenge level. The date of this program is Thursday, September 12, 2024. The bus will depart from the school at 9:20am and return by 2:15pm. Lunch will be provided. The program is outside, rain or shine, so please dress accordingly. The cost for the day is \$45.00. Payment and lunch selections will be through school cash online in August (notification will be sent).

We value the relationship and partnership we have with families, and look forward to speaking and working with you in the months ahead. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any questions. We welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

In order to remain informed of our school news, please read the weekly Spartan Speaks, our [school website](#) and follow us on Instagram @StouffvilleDSS. You can also find updated information about the Board at www.yrdsb.ca, Twitter @YRDSB, Instagram @yrdsb.schools, or the Board podcast TuneIn YRDSB wherever you listen to podcasts.

We look forward to working with you this year in support of your child.

Sincerely,

Dawn Laliberte
Principal

Neil Press
Vice-Principal

Jennifer Thom
Vice-Principal

Contact Information

For Ministry and Board compliance purposes, please ensure that the school has your up-to-date contact information, including:

- address, work or home numbers or other contact information
- emergency contacts and telephone numbers
- changes in custody agreements
- medical alert or changes in health condition (e.g., allergies, medications)

If your child has a medical condition that requires emergency intervention, an essential routine health care plan, or any of the following medical conditions: [Anaphylaxis](#), [Asthma](#), [Diabetes](#) or [Seizures](#) you must fill out the paperwork and contact your child's school to ensure all information is up-to-date and accurate.

Our School

Office hours: 8:30am to 4:30pm

School Day Organization:

Period	Times
Home Room and Period 1	9:20-10:40
Period 2	10:45-12:00
Lunch	12:00 - 12:50
Period 3	12:55-2:10
Period 4	2:15-3:30

Common Lunch

During the common lunch, students are permitted to eat in the cafeteria or the halls. Students are not permitted to sit in stairwells as this contravenes Fire Code Regulations. All students are asked to place all garbage in waste and recycling containers. Students are encouraged to participate in lunch activities and clubs. Students are to refrain from taking food into classrooms.

Additional Information

You can find information on topics covered in this package and more in the Guide to the School Year on the board website at www.yrdsb.ca/familyresources .

Accessibility

The Board is [committed to providing accessible programs, services and environments](#) support the four core principles of the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act (AODA): integration, equality of opportunity, dignity and independence. If you need assistance accessing Board services, speak to a staff member in the school about how they can help or support you. If you require any information or materials on the Board website in an alternative format, please contact Corporate Communications at communications@yrdsb.ca.

Accident Insurance

Student accident insurance provides coverage for injuries due to accidents not covered by government or private health plans (e.g. the cost of expensive dental work as a result of an accident). It is strongly recommended that parents/guardians of students involved in athletics purchase this insurance.

If your child is involved in an accident, whether at school or during non-school hours, insuremykids® protects your family from the resulting expenses, which are not normally covered under your government health and group insurance plans. For more information, visit insuremykids.com or call 1-800-463-5437.

Allergies/Medical Conditions

There are students and staff members in our school who have life-threatening allergies to nuts and other allergens. If they smell or come into contact with these foods or scents, they may have an anaphylactic reaction.

To help create an allergen-safe environment, do not bring nut or nut products to school. We also ask that students do not use scented body-spray in the school, as many staff and students have a severe reaction to scented products.

If your child has a serious or life-threatening allergy or prevalent medical condition, such as anaphylaxis, asthma, diabetes and/or epilepsy/seizure disorder, **please let the school administration know immediately** by completing and submitting the appropriate health care plan(s) below.

[Anaphylaxis](#), [Asthma](#), [Diabetes](#) or [Seizures](#)

Announcements

Important information is shared with students during the morning announcements. Students are asked to listen attentively and respectfully during the announcements and anthem. Announcements are also posted on the electronic screens in the main hall and cafeteria for reference.

Safe Arrival and Departure Program

The safety of our students is a priority. Our [safe arrivals programs and safe departures protocols](#) are in place so that we can account for the whereabouts of absent students. Please provide the school with complete and current emergency contact information.

1. If you have not informed the school of your child's absence in advance, the school will inform parents/guardians through the automated school attendance system when their child is identified as absent without explanation.
2. If you receive a call that your child is absent and you report back that your should be in attendance, the school will take the following steps to ensure your child is safe:

- We will call emergency numbers on file.
- We will speak to a sibling if one is in the school.
- If we are still unable to get information, we may check with a friend of your child and other staff members.
- If we are still unable to get information, we will consider your child missing and we may contact York Regional Police.

Arrivals & Departures

Families who live within walking distance are encouraged to use **active travel, including walking or rolling** (cycling, scootering, skateboarding) to and from school. Choosing [active travel](#) can improve physical and mental health and helps students start the day alert and ready to learn. It also helps to protect the environment and reduce traffic, making school zones safer for everyone.

Students who use bicycles, rollerblades, skateboards or scooters to travel to school:

- Must wear a helmet.
- Must walk while on school property.
- Should lock bicycles on the bike rack; and
- Must store rollerblades, skateboards or scooters in their locker.

Skateboards that are used as transportation to and from school, **upon arrival on school property**, must be picked up and carried to their lockers where they must be stored during the school day. **The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items.**

The school is not responsible for any lost or damaged personal items. Note: skateboards and scooters must be stored in lockers or locked up on bike racks during the school day. Families who **drive their children to school**, are asked to use the designated drop off area at the **east** side of the school.

Students who drive to school are required to obtain a pass, provide vehicle information to the main office, and park in the **West or North parking lots**.

For students who take the school bus, ensure you are at the front of the school before your pick-up time.

School Bus/Taxi Safety

When riding school buses/taxi, you must:

- Be at the bus stop five minutes before your scheduled pick up.
- Keep well away from the road until the bus has stopped. Do not move toward the bus until it has stopped.
- Watch for the bus driver's signal before crossing the road. Look both ways and then cross the road.
- Get on the bus safely by using the handrail and go directly to your seat.

- Stay seated while the bus is in motion
- Not eat or drink on the bus.
- Keep the aisle clear of books, knapsacks, lunch bags and other items.
- Keep windows closed.
- Never throw anything inside the bus or out of the window.
- Talk quietly so you do not distract the driver.
- Use respectful language.
- Do not vape or smoke on the bus.

Shouting, rough play, fighting, vaping/ smoking are strictly prohibited. Students engaging in these activities will have their bus privileges suspended. We expect that all students should treat buses as an extension of the school and follow school rules and policies.

Failure to abide by the bus safety and school expectations could result in the removal of bus privileges. Students must obey the bus driver at all times. School bus transportation is provided to and from home only. Information about bus routes and times can be found at www.schoolbuscity.com.

Parents/guardians, it is important to remember your child's bus number and pick-up/drop-off times.

Transportation will be cancelled by 6:00 a.m. if road conditions are unsafe or are expected to deteriorate significantly by the time students are to be transported home. To find out if transportation is cancelled, check: the @YRDSB Twitter account, the YRDSB website, school websites, the Student Transportation Services (STS) website at www.schoolbuscity.com or hotline 1-877-330-3001, radio and television media outlets. Schools will remain open unless otherwise stated. For more information, visit the [Student Transportation section of the Board website](#).

More information about bus routes and times can be found at www.schoolbuscity.com.

There may be rare occasions when unprecedented winter weather events occur and we need to close all schools and Board locations. For more information, please see the section on Weather Conditions in the Guide to the School Year. At all times, students and families should be aware of somewhere else they can go or someone to contact if bus services are cancelled or delayed, or if schools are forced to close due to an emergency.

Attendance Procedures

Students are expected to attend all of their classes regularly and punctually. Regular attendance is a vital part of learning. The only valid reasons for absences are:

- Illness/ appointment;
- Authorized School Activity; and/or
- Religious Observance

Students who are signed out of class(es), by their parent/guardian, are not to be on school property.

All students are expected to be on time for all classes. However, there are times when students will be late or absent from school. When this happens to you must:

UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE

- Have your parent/guardian call or email stouffville.dss@yrdsb.ca the Attendance Office (905-640-1433 Press 1) with an explanation at the start of the day you are absent.

- If this is not possible, phone the school yourself and bring a note from your parents/guardian to the Attendance Office upon your return to school.
- Parents/ guardians may be contacted where absences are unexplained.

18 YEARS OR OLDER

- Telephone the Attendance Office (905-640-1433 and Press 1) with an explanation on the day you are absent.
- If you have persistent unexplained absences, a conversation with your vice-principal will occur to support improved attendance.

It is expected that all students are in class regularly and on time. In the event that students are late/absent, teachers will track and administer interventions/consequences, including but not limited to contact with home, making up missed time (e.g. lunch detention), creation of an attendance contract etc. If a student continues to be late or truant, they will be referred to the office for progressive discipline and/or additional support. In the event of extended absence for illness, or an absence on the date of a scheduled assessment/evaluation, a medical note may be requested.

SIGNING IN/OUT

In the event that you must leave school early due to a valid reason, you must sign out at the Attendance Office. If you are under 18, this must be done with parent/guardian permission (call, note, email).

When you reach the age of 18, you may sign out independently with a valid reason. If you leave school and return before the end of the day, you must sign back in at the Attendance Office (explaining the circumstances) before proceeding to class.

If a student is signed out, they must leave the school property. Students cannot be signed out by a parent/guardian and remain in the school unsupervised.

REQUEST FOR ABSENCES OF 5 OR MORE INSTRUCTIONAL DAYS (E.G., VACATION)

A student who wishes to withdraw from school for five or more days at the request of parents or guardians must complete an "Extraordinary Absence Form" one week in advance for the proposed absence. This form may be obtained from the Attendance Office. It must be completed fully by both the parents and teachers involved and then submitted to the Administration at least one week prior to your planned absence. This will allow your teachers to help you make up for missed work.

The January Examinations will occur from **January 22 – January 28, 2025** and the June Examinations will occur from **June 18 – 24, 2025**. Exams must be written during these scheduled dates. As a result, please do not schedule vacations during these times.

It is the student's responsibility to make up work missed due to lateness or absences. Again, it is important to be on time for all classes.

Weather Conditions

Transportation will be cancelled by 6:00 a.m. if conditions are unsafe or are expected to deteriorate significantly by the time students are to be transported home. Schools will remain open unless otherwise stated. For more information, visit the [Student Transportation section of the Board website](#).

To find out if transportation is cancelled, check: the @YRDSB Twitter account, the YRDSB website, school websites, the Student Transportation Services' (STS) website at www.schoolbuscity.com or hotline 1-877-330-3001, radio and television media outlets.

There may be rare occasions when unprecedented **winter weather events** occur and we need to close all schools and Board locations. For more information, please see the [Severe Weather policy and procedures](#). At all times, students and families should be aware of somewhere else they can go or someone to contact if bus services are cancelled or delayed, or if schools are forced to close due to an emergency.

Caring and Safe Schools

Every student has a right to learn in a caring, safe and inclusive environment. We ask all students and families to review our [Caring and Safe Schools policy and procedures](#), which address a number of topics including:

- student progressive discipline
- bullying prevention and intervention
- student suspensions and expulsions

Students will review this important information during the Caring and Safe Schools start-up and mid-year presentations.

To enhance caring, safe, and inclusive school climates, positive student behaviour supports are provided and inappropriate behaviour is addressed using a [bias-aware progressive discipline](#) approach that takes into account mitigating factors.

We use a bias-aware progressive discipline approach when inappropriate behaviour occurs. This means we consider a range of options to determine the most appropriate responses to each situation to help students learn from their choices. In some cases, suspension or expulsion may be necessary. [The Ontario Education Act](#) and our Board's [Caring and Safe Schools Policy](#) outline the situations in which suspension and expulsion must be considered. When inappropriate behaviour occurs, information will be shared with the victim(s) and their families to the extent that legislation allows.

Report IT

[YRDSB's online Report IT](#) button lets you share information about inappropriate behaviour or incidents of hate or discrimination. It is available on the Board and school website.

Code of Conduct

YRDSB's Code of Conduct sets standards of behaviour for students and members of the school community that support a caring, safe and inclusive school environment. All school members must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, creed, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability.

The Code of Conduct applies to all members of the school community including students, parents or guardians, school bus drivers, volunteers, school staff and community groups whether they are on York Region District School Board property, in a virtual learning environment, on school buses, at

school-authorized events or activities, in before- and after-school programs including co-curricular activities and field trips, and may be applied to any other circumstances connected to the school that may have an impact on the school climate.

The [Code of Conduct](#) is part of the Caring and Safe Schools Policy.

SDSS Code of Student Conduct

A positive school climate is essential for students to succeed in school, as it promotes a safe, respectful and welcoming learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct sets standards of behaviour for students and members of the school community that support a caring, safe and inclusive school environment. All school members must respect and treat others fairly, regardless of race, ancestry, place of origin, colour, ethnic origin, creed, sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, age, marital status, family status or disability. The code applies whether on school property, on school buses, at school-related events or activities, before and/or after school programs or in other circumstances that could have an impact on the school climate.

To enhance caring, safe, and inclusive school climates, positive student behaviour supports are provided and inappropriate behaviour is addressed using a bias-aware progressive discipline approach that takes into account mitigating factors.

Students are expected to demonstrate behaviour that is respectful and courteous at all times. This includes demonstrating respect for each other and our community members. These expectations are indicated in our School Code of Student Conduct. Students are expected to demonstrate this code of behaviour on school property and during offsite Board or school-sponsored events and activities.

Our primary goal at S.D.S.S. is to help students develop their potential as individuals and as contributing responsible members of society who will think critically, demonstrate empathy, and act responsibly. This goal can best be realized in a school environment in which all individuals have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities, as well as an awareness of the rights and responsibilities of others within our community.

Students, teachers, and parents share the responsibility of developing and achieving the goals of S.D.S.S. Listed below are areas for which behaviour inconsistent with expectations may result in progressive discipline while providing support for improved student behaviour. In each area a rationale is given, the expected behaviour is explained and the possible consequences for harm caused by inappropriate actions are outlined.

Academic Honesty

Stouffville District S.S. students are expected to think independently and behave honestly. True learning in an intellectually stimulating environment is enhanced when students consistently demonstrate respect for the intellectual property rights of others in all evaluation activities. Students are also expected to complete their tests, assignments and exams independently. Students are not permitted to speak to each other or out loud to themselves during tests/exams or to use unauthorized aids or resources of any kind.

For YRDSB definitions of cheating and plagiarism, refer to the Academic Honesty section in the YRDSB **Guide to the School Year** booklet.

Consequences/Supports

The consequences and learning about cheating or plagiarism may include: contact with parents/guardians, referral to administration, disciplinary action, re-doing the task or a portion of the task,

or a mark of zero in the absence of original work, and completion of a learning activity. Consequences are administered in alignment with Growing Success and Board Policy and Procedure 305.2 taking into consideration knowledge of the learner, circumstances and responses designed to facilitate collection of evidence.

Respect for Property

Students are expected to treat the school grounds, building, and resources with respect and care.

Students are expected to keep the property tidy. Therefore, all food must be disposed into proper receptacles. It is expected students will familiarize themselves with and follow the expectations governing the use of lockers, parking facilities, textbooks, bulletin boards, and the cafeteria.

Students are expected to treat all school property and facilities with respect. Vandalism of any nature will not be tolerated.

Consequences/Supports

A student who damages school property will be referred to an administrator and progressive discipline will apply. Parents will be contacted and informed that payment may be made for the cost of any repairs or replacement of items. Students will be supported with activities such as counselling, restorative circles/conference or referral to outside agencies aimed at supporting improved behaviour.

Respect for Others

Students are expected to comply with the behaviour expectations of the school and to cooperate with adults in the building, on the grounds, on the school buses, in the community, and at any school activity. This includes providing your full name upon request.

As well, students are expected to use respectful language, in an appropriate tone of voice at all times. Hateful, offensive and/or derogatory comments will not be tolerated. All individuals, regardless of their sex, religion, race, ethnic background, sexual orientation, size, or ability, are entitled to personal dignity and to learn in an environment free from any form of harassment.

Consequences/Supports

Showing a lack of respect for others will result in progressive intervention/discipline referral to an administrator, parent contact, restorative practices, counselling, possible police involvement, and/or suspension from school.

Respect for Self

Students are expected to come to school free from the influence of alcohol or drugs. Such substances are forbidden on school property or at any school sponsored activity.

Consequences/Supports

Showing a lack of respect for oneself will lead to interventions/consequences such as: referral to an administrator, parental contact, referral to a counsellor, referral to a social agency, involvement of police, and/or suspension from school.

Preparation for Class

Students are expected to be prepared for each class; that is, to have the books and materials specified by their teachers. They are expected to submit completed homework and assignments on time. Students are expected to study for and attend each test or exam.

Consequences/Supports

Arriving habitually unprepared for a class will lead to: parental contact by a teacher, referral to an administrator, referral to a counsellor and/or performance contract.

Communication between School and Home

Parents/guardians are our most important partners in educating children. We communicate with you in a variety of ways throughout the year.

Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL)

Canada's Anti-Spam Legislation (CASL) impacts how schools, staff and school councils communicate electronically to parents. CASL prohibits the sending of any type of electronic message that is commercial in nature (e.g., registration fees, pizza days, field trips, fundraising, etc.) unless the recipient has provided specific and informed consent. CASL does not apply to electronic information messages or to hard copy formats.

To subscribe or unsubscribe to commercial electronic messages, visit the school website or Family Resources page at www.yrdsb.ca/familyresources and, using the link provided, submit a valid email address

Spartan Speaks Email

To improve communication between home and school and reduce paper use, we coordinate an email distribution list and send the Spartan Speaks newsletter weekly to parents. The list will be maintained and used only by school staff to communicate electronically to parents/guardians. Your email will not be sold, distributed or publicly posted.

Texts

Families can receive text messages in emergency situations only - such as the rare occasion of schools being closed due to emergency winter weather. Ensure your school has your correct cell phone number captured to participate. Families can opt out at any time.

Stay Connected Online

You can also stay connected online through our school website, stouffvilledistrict.ss@yrdsb.ca Your child's teacher will provide more information about other web based applications that support communication between teachers and families, such as TeachAssist.

In addition, you can follow Board news and updates through:

- Instagram @Stouffvilledss
- www.yrdsb.ca
- Instagram @yrdsb.schools
- Twitter @YRDSB
- [YouTube channel YRDSBMedia](#)
- [TuneIn YRDSB](#), the Board's podcast, available on most podcast platforms

Consent for Information Sharing – Students at the Age of Majority

Once a student reaches the age of majority (18) all communications regarding their school matters (e.g., absences, etc.) will automatically cease to go to the parents/guardians as the student is deemed an adult for the purposes of the Education Act.

A student may complete the **Consent for Information Sharing – Students at the Age of Majority Form** available through the school to provide express approval for the school to contact parent(s)/guardian(s).

Appropriate Attire

Stouffville District S.S. has a dress code under the school's code of conduct.

Clothing should meet the following guidelines:

- Clothing will not display inappropriate language or graphics (hate/ discrimination/ stereotypes, drugs/ alcohol/ weapons)
- Shoes must be worn at all times

For further information, see the [Student Dress Code Policy and Procedure](#)

Emergency Information

Office staff should be notified as soon as possible if any of the following information changes:

- address, work or home numbers or other contact information;
- emergency contacts and telephone numbers;
- changes in custody agreements; and
- medical alert or changes in health condition (e.g., allergies, medications).

Emergency Preparedness

The Board has a number of policies and procedures in place to address emergency situations when normal school operations cannot continue or where student and staff member safety may be at risk. This could include a fire, flood or acts of violence. All schools have individual plans and conduct drills throughout the year.

There will be six fire drills, two lockdown, and one hold and secure drill annually so students become familiar with emergency preparedness procedures. These drills are important so that in the case of an actual emergency, students and staff members know what to do to be safe.

Excursions/Community Walkabouts

Our outdoor spaces are learning spaces. We recognize that playing and learning in the outdoors supports student learning and well-being through the seasons. Opportunities for students to build connections to the land have meaningful, long-term, positive health implications, especially on mental health and well-being. Community walks are not field trips. They are defined as community excursions that take place off school property, which last less than one day and do not require transportation.

Family Resources

Visit www.yrdsb.ca/familyresources or click on the link from the Board's homepage to access a variety of resources for families, including:

- start-up forms (when available)
- IT support for families
- translation tools, privacy considerations and more
- links to community resources, curriculum materials, student supports and more
- online tools like Google Classroom, Edsby and School Cash Online. Click on the "Need Help?" link for access to tips and resources to support you in using these online tools.

Guidance

The Guidance Department offers a number of services, including support for academic and career planning, personal counseling, referrals to community resources, and support for the development of study habits and life skills. For more information, contact the Guidance Department.

Homework

The Ministry of Education defines homework as “work that students do at home to practise skills, consolidate knowledge and skills, and /or prepare for the next class.”

The Board has a homework policy that supports student learning and recognizes the importance of personal and family well-being. The amount, frequency and nature of assigned homework will vary depending on the student’s strengths and needs, well-being, grade, subject and other factors. For more information about time guidelines and how parents can provide support, please see the Guide to the School Year and the [Board Homework Policy and Procedure](#).

How Can We Help You?

Most concerns can be resolved with dialogue and cooperation. If you have a school-related question or concern, please follow these steps:

1. Arrange a meeting with your child’s teacher or the appropriate school staff member.
2. If you need further assistance, the school vice-principals or designates may be contacted to review the matter, mediate and help facilitate the process.
3. Contact the superintendent for our school if the matter remains unresolved.

You can also contact your local trustee. Trustees are committed to open dialogue with the community. You are encouraged to share your views on policy issues and Board governance with your local trustee. You are also welcome to attend and observe any public Board, Advisory or Board Committee meeting. Meeting information is available on the Board website.

We are committed to addressing concerns in a fair, equitable and timely manner.

If you have a human rights related concern and/or complaint, the first step is to engage with the school or the superintendent. Following a review of the matter, a determination is made on whether or not it is to be referred to the Board’s Human Rights Commissioner’s Office. The Independent Office of the Integrity Commissioner may also be engaged to address concerns related to trustee behaviour. Contact information can be found on the Board website, or by contacting the school

More information is available in the [Guide to the School Year](#) and on the Board website.

Personal and School Property

The school and the Board are not responsible for lost, damaged or stolen personal items. You can reduce the risk by leaving valuable items at home. Always secure items.

Students are expected to show respect for school property and materials at all times. Students, together with their parents/guardians, are responsible for ensuring that school items are returned in good condition. Textbooks, lockers, desks and chairs should not be vandalized (e.g., writing inside school

books, torn pages, holes in desks, etc.). Lost or damaged textbooks, library books or other school materials are the responsibility of the student. Restitution will be expected and outlined by each school.

Requests for Faith Accommodation

There may be circumstances where students and families request accommodation for religious beliefs in curriculum areas including the Arts and Physical Education. Accommodations may include different instruction and assessment opportunities, or full withdrawal. If you are interested in discussing an accommodation based upon your religious beliefs, speak with your child's teacher and the school principal or complete the **Faith Requests for Curriculum Accommodations Form** available through the school. By providing a range of accommodations, we are building a sense of community and belonging for all students. For more information, see Board Procedure on Equity and Inclusivity: Religious Accommodation.

Significant Faith Days

York Region is rich in culture and diverse in religious beliefs and practices based on faith. The dates listed below are some faith holidays of particular significance to members of the major faith communities in our Board. We affirm and value equally the faith diversity in our schools, therefore, events such as field trips, school concerts, conferences, meetings, workshops, other professional events, co-curricular activities and exams/tests will not be scheduled on these dates:

2024-2025	Faith Day	Faith
October 3-4, 2024	Rosh Hashanah ²	Judaism
October 12, 2024	Yom Kippur ²	Judaism
November 1, 2024	Diwali	Hinduism
December 25, 2024	Christmas	Christianity (Western)
January 7, 2025	Christmas	Christianity (Eastern)

January 29, 2025	Lunar New Year	Buddhism
March 31, 2025	Eid-ul-Fitr ^{1 2}	Islam
April 13, 2025	Pesach/Passover ²	Judaism
April 14, 2025	Vaisakhi	Sikhism
April 18, 2025	Good Friday	Christianity (Western)
April 18, 2025	Holy Friday	Christianity (Eastern)
April 20, 2025	Ridvan	Baha'i
June 6, 2025	Ed-ul-Adha ^{1 2}	Islam

¹ Dates are subject to the sighting of the moon each month and may vary for different members of the Islamic faith

² All Jewish and Islamic Holy Days commence on the preceding evening at sundown or sunset.

Please note that in addition to the above listed dates, we will take reasonable steps to accommodate students and staff members of a faith group for whom the Board's and the school's operations or requirements create undue hardship and interfere with their ability to exercise their religious beliefs and practices.

Locks, Lockers and Valuable

Lockers are the property of the school. The school reserves the right to inspect lockers if there is a suspicion that the contents are in contravention of the safe schools policy.

A locker will be assigned to every student. Students are not to share lockers. This is a privilege granted solely for the purpose of temporary storage of books and clothing. Lockers are not theft-proof. Neither the YRDSB nor any employee of the Board is responsible for any article lost or stolen. **DO NOT LEAVE MONEY OR VALUABLES IN YOUR LOCKER.** All contents must be removed from lockers on the last day of classes in June.

Parents/Guardians and students are advised that there is no security for valuables during Physical Education classes. Valuable items should never be left in the Physical Education change rooms. Limited protection of personal articles is provided. The school is not responsible for loss or theft of personal items.

Lost and Found

The school cannot take responsibility for items lost in the classroom, change rooms, or from lockers. Lost articles such as books, binders, etc., which are found around the school or on its grounds should be turned into the main office. Students may check in the lost and found in the hallway outside the main office for articles which may have been found.

Parking

Student vehicles are to be parked in valid student parking spots (West and North Parking Lots only). Cars waiting for students after school must avoid the bus loading area at the Front of the school. Students may not park in the staff parking lots (Front and East lots) or stand around parked vehicles in any parking lots. Students who drive recklessly or dangerously on the school grounds, will have their driving privileges on school property revoked.

Rules for parking on school property:

1. All students driving and parking their vehicles at school must register their vehicle in the school's Main Office and display a valid tag. Vehicles without a valid parking pass may be ticketed or towed away at the owner's expense after attempts to inform the vehicle owner;
2. **Sitting in your car during the school day is not permitted (this includes the lunch hour);**
3. Short-term visitors to the school may use the "Visitors Only" parking spaces located in front of the school.
4. Drive cautiously on school property at all times. Speeding and careless driving will result in loss of parking privileges and will involve notification of the police;
5. The school will assume neither responsibility nor liability for damage to vehicles parked on school property; and
6. Smoking/vaping in cars on school property is not permitted.

[Parking Pass Form](#)

No Parking in Fire Routes

Any designated Fire Route needs to be clear of vehicles and ready for use by emergency vehicles. You may not idle in these areas, or leave your vehicle even for short periods of time.

Please note that the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville is permitted to ticket students, staff and parents for all by-law infractions related to smoking/vaping and parking. In the event that a student, parent or staff member receive a ticket, the school is unable to influence/change the actions of Law Enforcement personnel.

Report Cards

For all students there will be six reporting periods during the year: October, November, February, March, April and June.

Early recognition of poor achievement enhances student chances of future success with timely intervention and support. Feedback from parents is always appreciated. Student Progress Interview Evenings are normally held in October and March, and can be booked through TeachAssist. By contacting the school, parents may also request a progress update from subject teacher(s) at any time during the school year.

School Council

As parents/guardians, there are many ways you can be engaged in your child's learning at home and at school. This includes getting involved with the school council. Contact school office staff for more information. Elections shall occur within the first thirty days of the start of each school year. School Council Nomination Forms are due by Friday, September 20, 2024.

Student Personal Information

Schools routinely collect, use and release student personal information, in keeping with the Education Act and other laws. Whenever your child's personal information is collected, its use will be explained to you.

Parents/guardians, please sign the **Student Personal Information Consent Form** and see the section on Privacy and Information Access in the Guide to the School Year for more information.

If you have any questions about your child's privacy protection, please contact the school principal or the Information Access and Privacy Office at 905-727-0022 ext. 2015.

Technology Use

All students and their parents/guardians are expected to read the [Use of Technology Agreement](#) (in the Guide to the School Year or available on the Board website). They are also required to sign and return the **School Start-Up Permissions Form** to acknowledge that they have read, understand and will support the conditions/rules concerning the use of school/Board and personal technology as it supports learning.

This agreement is designed to ensure a safe and supportive school environment and network integrity.

We believe the classroom is the ideal place to teach students how to use digital tools effectively and responsibly, and how to stay safe online. Google Suite for Education is one of the tools educators may use to engage students in online learning and teach students how to stay safe and be responsible using technology.

Through Google Suite, students have access to a Google Suite Gmail. This Gmail access is customized for appropriate age levels. We have also put strict measures in place to prevent SPAM and block inappropriate language and websites for students using email through the Google Suite. For more information, please visit the Board website or speak to your child's teacher about the tools they are using in the classroom.

We all have a role to play in helping students to become responsible digital citizens. [Digital citizenship at home resources](#) are available on our Board website.

Use of Non-Board Electronic Devices

We recognize that learning can be enhanced by technology and we have created opportunities in our classrooms to leverage digital tools to enhance teaching, learning and communication.

Students are expected to adhere to all policies, procedures, and codes of conduct when using any form of technology so that the privacy and personal dignity of others is not violated and teaching and learning is not disrupted. ***Cell phones and other personal communications/electronic devices are to be turned off and kept out of sight during all instructional periods, except with the explicit permission of the classroom teacher.***

Exceptions

1. During non-instructional time students may make appropriate use of their electronic devices within or outside the school building. Non-instructional time is before school, after school, at lunch, and during a student's study hall period. All other times are deemed instructional.
2. Students may not use personal mobile devices (including cell phones) during instructional time except under the following circumstances: for educational purposes, as directed by an educator; for health and medical purposes; and to support special education needs.

Discussions will take place in our classrooms throughout the year about the impact of digital footprints and how a positive attitude towards using technology supports collaboration, learning and productivity.

Camera and/or video functions on mobile devices are not permitted for use on school property without clear permission from the principal or teacher. Infractions will be dealt with as student discipline, under Caring and Safe Schools Policy and its related procedures.

Students are responsible for the care and security of their personal devices. The school is not responsible for any damage, loss or theft. There are exceptions for students who need specific devices as per their Individual Education Plan, such as voice recorders and other mobile technology. Board staff manage the use of these tools.

At no time may electronic devices be used in washrooms or changerooms.

Consequences

Consequences for actions which contravene Board Policy #668.0, Caring and Safe Schools; Board Policy #194.0, Use of Technology; related procedures; and the student code of conduct may range from withdrawal of privileges to suspension from school.

Smoke-Free Environment

The York Region District School Board believes that all students and staff have the right to a safe and healthy learning and working environment. Through its mission, vision and values and in accordance with the *Smoke Free Ontario Act*, the Board provides a working and learning environment which is free from tobacco/marijuana products. Smoking/ vaping and/or holding lit tobacco/marijuana products, consuming or using any other tobacco/marijuana product and vaping is therefore prohibited on Board property, within 20 feet of school property, or in personal vehicles parked on Board property. Please see the YRDSB **Guide to the School Year** booklet for more information. Students found smoking or vaping in the school, its washrooms, or within 20 feet of the school's perimeter will face consequences including by-law fines in excess of \$300.

Visitors

All visitors (including parents/guardians) must:

- Use the main entrance of the school.
- Check in at the main office when they arrive.
- Only visit classrooms or other locations within the school, with permission from the principal or their designate.

The office staff will get important information and materials to your child.

Volunteering in the School

We welcome and encourage the important role that parents/guardians and community members play in education. There are many opportunities for you to get involved at the school. For more information, contact the school office staff or review [Volunteers in Our Schools Policy and Procedure](#). If you are interested, please complete the **Volunteers in Our Schools Form** and return it to the school office.

Fair Notices

Reporting Children And Youth In Need Of Protection

All school board staff have a legal responsibility to notify a child protection agency if there are concerns for the well-being of students under the age of 16 years. Staff may report suspicions of a protection concern to a child protection agency for youth aged 16 and 17 years. Any suspicions of physical or sexual abuse, neglect or lack of care by a parent/guardian must be reported immediately to the administrator for all students under the age of 18 years. Parents/guardians will not be consulted in these situations.

Student Threat-Risk Assessment Protocol: Fair Notice and Process

Threat Assessment and Intervention

Schools continue to be among the safest places in our community. The well-being and safety of members of the school community are a shared responsibility. This includes preventing and responding to the risk of violence.

Our Student Threat-Risk Assessment Protocol was developed with community partners to respond to behaviours, including actions, statements and other indicators that suggest that a student may be “at risk” of harming others. To keep school communities safe and provide support to everyone, staff, parents/guardians, students, and community members must report all threatening situations to the school administrator or police as soon as possible. Note – other procedures and protocols are in place to deal with threats from adults in the school community.

What is the purpose of the Threat Assessment Protocol?

- Ensure the safety of students, staff, parents/guardians, and other members of the school community
- Ensure an effective and timely response when there is a threatening situation
- Understand the factors that contribute to a threatening situation
- Assist in the development of an intervention plan
- Promote the emotional and physical safety of everyone involved

What is a threatening situation?

A threatening situation is defined as an indication of impending harm or violent acts against someone or something. Threats may be implied, verbal, written, drawn, posted on the internet, sent electronically or by information technology of any type, made by gesture or reasonably inferred from the surrounding circumstances of events. Threats may be direct, indirect, conditional or veiled.

What behaviours activate the Threat Assessment Protocol?

The protocol will be initiated when behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Serious violence with intent to harm or kill;
- Verbal/written threats of serious violence to harm or kill others (clear, direct and plausible);
- Use of technology to communicate threats to harm/kill others.
- Possession of weapons (including replicas);
- Bomb threats (making and/or detonating explosive devices);
- Fire setting;
- Sexual assault;
- Criminal Harassment;
- Gang-related occurrences.

What happens when a threatening situation is reported?

All threatening behaviours by a student shall be reported to the principal who will activate the Threat Assessment protocol.

Once a threatening situation has been reported to a school administrator, interviews will be conducted. These interviews may include students, staff, family members and/or others as appropriate. This will be done to determine the level of risk, and develop an effective and timely response to the incident. After the immediate safety risk has been addressed, support and intervention plans will be developed with input from parents/guardians.

Who is a member of a Threat Assessment team?

Each school will have staff trained in the Threat Assessment protocol. A multi-disciplinary Threat Assessment team will assess the situation and support the development of an intervention plan. The team includes a School Administrator, a School Social Worker and/or a Psychological Services staff member, a York Regional Police officer, and appropriate members of the student's circle of care.

Is parental/guardian or student consent required? Consent is not required to respond to an emergency situation. When there is a risk that someone may be harmed, it is important that the incident be addressed as quickly and effectively as possible.

Fair Notice Please consider this as "fair notice" to all members of the school community that any report of a threatening situation will be investigated. The Threat Assessment protocol is part of our strategy to create a safe, secure and supportive school environment for everyone.

YRDSB Student Suicide Intervention Protocol Fair Notice York Region District School Board is committed to student well-being and mental health. YRDSB has developed a Student Suicide Intervention Protocol to help keep students safe in the event of suicidal thoughts or actions. Youth suicide is a complex, emotionally-charged and sadly real problem in Canada. It is the second leading cause of death amongst young people. It's important to recognize that those who struggle with mental health have personal strength and resilience and the potential to overcome difficulties to ultimately thrive.

The YRDSB Student Suicide Intervention Protocol is designed to address the six steps involved when responding to current and present thoughts of suicide, as well as actions related to suicide. In addition, the Protocol is governed by a set of guiding principles which are underpinned by a culturally responsive and reflective practice.

Suicide is not culturally neutral. Our cultural and ethnic backgrounds will inform how each of us understands suicide. To see all the guiding principles, see the [Student Suicide Intervention Protocol on the Board website, or request a copy through the school office.](#)

Given the urgent need to help keep students safe from suicide, each school has access to Board staff trained in suicide intervention. In the urgent situation of suicide intervention, staff trained in suicide intervention do not require parental / guardian consent to intervene. However, we do make every effort to contact parents/ guardians to apprise you of your child's situation and the assistance provided. Parents/guardians are an integral part of keeping their children safe. In the event that the intervention protocol is used, a record of the intervention will be shared with you (student consent to share information is required for those over the age of 18 years) and a copy will be created and stored in a private and confidential on-line records management system. In accordance with privacy and health records legislation, a copy will be retained for one year plus a day following the intervention. As per the protocol parental/guardian (student if 18 or over) consent will be sought to share the intervention plan with those members identified in the record. If you have any questions about the Student Suicide Intervention Protocol please contact your school principal.

Additional Information

You can find more information on these and other topics in the **Guide to the School Year** included with this package or on the York Region District School Board website at www.yrdsb.ca.