



UNIONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

201 Town Centre BLVD., Markham, Ontario L3R-8G5 Tel: (905) 479-2787

Parent Bulletin for Thursday, April 9

A Message from Ms. Cheong

Dear UHS Families,

We have completed Week One of UHS Online and for the most part, it has gone quite smoothly. Our staff are to be commended for their efforts to prepare and deliver a quality program. This learning adventure has involved rethinking all of our units of study in all courses, developing new materials that are conducive to an online learning environment, and rethinking assessment. As you can imagine, this has required a great deal of time and for many of us, new learning.

This week we reached out to our students to get their feedback on the online experience. Here is some of what they shared with us in response to a few questions we asked:

Can you share a highlight or positive experience from this past week?

- "In the past few days I have received regular updates consistently on lessons and assessments."
- "Learning online wasn't complicated."
- "My teachers are very responsive to emails."
- "My teachers teach surprisingly well through video and seem really natural doing it. I also like how I am able to replay parts that I missed. I like the ability to work at my own pace."
- "My teachers have been very positive and flexible!"
- "Honestly, online school is so much more enjoyable. I can manage my own schedule of learning and take breaks as I need. On top of this I am surprisingly much more motivated and productive!"
- "All my teachers are really considerate of how everyone's situation is different and letting us take things at our own pace."
- "It's definitely a fun experience. It's more of an independent learning method which prepares students for higher grades."

Can you share any unexpected challenges?

- "It's hard balancing between school work and the things I have to do at home."
- "It was hard to really understand some assignments without the full explanation from a teacher in person."
- "Sometimes the internet would be really slow."
- "I've felt very depressed and negatively impacted by being away from the people I love."
- "There are too many distractions around my house while I'm working on my laptop."
- "I think it requires more time for us to plan everything and learn everything ourselves."
- "It's a little hard to communicate when you have questions because you can't get the answer right back."
- "Most of my teachers post at around the same time and the notifications tend to pile up. Consequently, it is a bit challenging for me to navigate through all of the assignments and classes."
- "Sometimes, I find that the websites and online pages provided for students to look at are rather hard to understand. It is definitely more difficult to learn without my usual teachers presenting the lessons themselves."
- "It is sometimes difficult when a teacher gives a difficult assignment that you need clarification on. They are being very understanding and helpful as best they can, but it is not the same as being in a class setting and talking to them face to face."
- "No challenges have tested me yet, but I'll keep a lookout."
- "My weight has increased by 2kg."

What can we do to better support you?

- "Send out weekly updates, almost like a newsletter via email to dispel student uncertainty and anxiety."
- "Keep being flexible, understanding of the students and optimistic about the situation."
- "Encourage everyone to do sports activities."
- "Set up a more robust and more frequent communication system."

We have shared this feedback with teachers, Guidance and Student Success teams to support our students moving forward. We rely on student voices to help us design engaging lessons and projects that do not overwhelm students or parents!

Student Wellness

We recognize that you and your child may have questions regarding our new distance learning model. If it is helpful for you to connect with a staff member from the school, please contact a teacher, guidance counsellor or administrator to discuss your questions.

If you have concerns about how your child is coping with online learning and being away from friends, including possible concerns for their mental health, help is available. Resources and supports related to student mental health can be accessed through [YRDSB COVID-19 Mental Health Resources for Students and Families](#). If you ever have an immediate safety concern for your child, including risk of suicide, please contact your local hospital or emergency services by calling 911 immediately.

We remain deeply committed to supporting our students and families as we continue to navigate the effects of COVID-19 on education. If our school can support your family in any way, we encourage you to connect with us:

Guidance Counselors

Ms. Farwell (A-H): michelle.farwell@yrdsb.ca

Ms. Riolo (I-N): rita.riolo@yrdsb.ca

Ms. Hawkins (O-Yo): stephanie.hawkins@yrdsb.ca

Ms. Choi (Yu-Z): yu-kyung.choi@yrdsb.ca

Administration

Mr. Gazaneo; Vice-Principal (A-L): andrew.gazaneo@yrdsb.ca

Mr. Belmonte; Vice-Principal (M-Z): patrick.belmonte@yrdsb.ca

Ms. Cheong; Principal: suelyn.cheong@yrdsb.ca

A Message from Our Director

Mid-term Marks for Graduating Students and Final Marks for Half-Credit Courses

Dear families and students in secondary school,

Yesterday, I sent a message providing information regarding assessment, evaluation and reporting during COVID-19, as well as additional details about access to technology, learning from home and tips available for families on our Board website. This update provides further specifics about final marks for half-credit courses and midterm marks. This year, midterm marks are only required for graduating students.

Teachers will use their professional judgement and interpretation of evidence of student learning when determining final marks for half-credit courses and midterm marks for potential graduates. Under the current circumstances, teachers are asked to use the full body of assessment evidence available to them based on work assigned up until March 13 to determine a midterm mark that reflects a student's learning and achievement to date. Additionally, teachers may use evidence of learning and formative assessment from April 6 onward, if the further achievement of expectations results in an improved mark. Midterm marks will be submitted to the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and the Ontario College Application Service (OCAS) on April 23.

If you have questions about assessment, evaluation and reporting, or any other classroom or course-related questions, I encourage you to connect with your child's teachers directly. Thank you for your support during these exceptional circumstances. Please continue to visit our Board website and Twitter for updates while your child learns from home.

Sincerely,

Louise Sirisko

Important Dates

In order to meet mark reporting deadlines set out by the Ontario Universities' Application Centre (OUAC) and Ontario College Application Service (OCAS), we have adjusted our timelines as follows:

April 9	Final day for Semester 2, Term 1 courses
April 14	First day of Semester 2, Term 2 courses

April 16	Teachers will share only midterm marks, via TeachAssist, with Grade 12 students and Grade 11 students who have indicated to Guidance their intention to graduate this school year. Parents and Guardians will need their child's password in order to view the midterm marks on TeachAssist. Teachers will also share final marks for all Term 1 courses ending April 9.
April 17 – 22	Students may contact their alpha Guidance Counselor, by booking an appointment through TeachAssist to indicate their need, discuss their post-secondary destination and/or drop a course if needed. An email from a parent/guardian giving permission is required if the student is under the age of 18 and would like to drop a course in addition to the google form that will be completed by the student. We ask that once the student books his/her appointment, they will need to email the counsellor with contact information (e.g. phone number) where the student can be reached. Please note that the counsellor will be calling from a 'blocked' or 'unknown caller' number. (See above for counselor alpha list.) Students experiencing difficulty booking an appointment can contact Ms. Louie, the Guidance secretary: linda.louie@yrdsb.ca
April 22	This is the last day that a student may drop a course in order for it <u>not</u> to be reported to universities or colleges. Midterm marks for all courses not dropped by this date will be reported to post-secondary institutions, as applicable.
April 23	Midterm marks are reported to OUAC and OCAS for those students who have applied to universities and/or colleges.

Distribution of Technology

We are continuing to arrange technology retrieval at the school. Some students are still waiting for devices, internet access, and SEA laptops. A staff member will be in contact with you by Wednesday, April 15 if you requested a device in our board survey or if your child has a SEA laptop. Technology pick-up will take place at UHS **on Thursday, April 16**. You must attend the school during your designated time slot. When you arrive at the school, please do not get out of your car. Please pull up to the front entrance on Town Centre Boulevard and pop your trunk from inside the car so that one of our staff can put the device in your trunk for you.

Consent Required When Student Turns 18

Close to the time that students turn 18, we will be sending them an Over 18 Consent Form via email asking if they agree to provide their parents/guardian with access to their school records (i.e. academics and attendance). If they do not agree, we can still send notices to parents regarding school closures; however, teachers will not be permitted to speak to parents about marks and attendance. All VISA students, as per their contract with International Education, will be required to sign the Over 18 Consent Form.

How to Access Google Classroom

Right now students are accessing their learning online through a few different platforms. The most popular platform is Google Classroom. If you and your child would like support on how to access Google Classroom, please watch the [English](#) or [Mandarin](#) version of this video.

Information on Applying for the CERB Benefit

Do you require information on how to apply for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit? If so, [click this link](#). If you require these instructions in Chinese, [you can click this link](#).

Hand Up for Kids

[Click this link](#) to find out how to get a breakfast care package delivered to your home in the greater Toronto area including Markham, Richmond Hill, and Vaughan.

York Hills Here to Help Phone Line

[The Here to Help Phone Line](#) is a free service available to children, youth (0-18) and their parents, caregiver or adult supporters. This service is available Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 9:30 AM to 4:00 PM. Call us if you have concerns that could benefit from quick access to phone counselling.