



# UNIONVILLE HIGH SCHOOL

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

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## ***Parent Bulletin for Friday, May 29, 2020***

### **A Message from our Director Asking for Parent Input**

Dear families,

I hope you and your families are healthy and well. Our staff miss seeing our students in person each day. I know I speak on behalf of all staff when I say, we look forward to seeing everyone as soon as it's safe to do so.

Your voice is important to us and we are asking for you to share your thoughts through a quick, [online survey](#). We are hoping to learn your thoughts and ideas in real-time about the [Learning and Caring Plan](#), until the end of this school year and to inform decision making for our return in September.

You can participate anonymously and your responses will be confidential. As always, your participation is voluntary.

Your responses will help our Board assess and inform best practices related to our programs and services.

Thank you,

Louise Sirisko

Director of Education

### **A Message from Our Trustee**

Dear families,

The past few months have been challenging in many aspects within the system and particularly in the community I serve. First and foremost, I want to applaud your perseverance and resilience demonstrated as a parent and as a community member. As a father with a child in the system, I can relate to each and every single one of you how much we have contributed together thus far. I hope that you and your loved ones are keeping well and are healthy.

As a Board of Trustees, we know that our families have experienced this pandemic and the school closures in different ways, and I want you to know that my thoughts have been with you all.

With your voices and input, the PPE narrative has come a long way since February from both a public health and a local perspective, as I brought your voice to the board. You know the most as a community. I want to thank you and the board for your concerted efforts.

Since the extension of March Break, the school board moved quickly to introduce an equitable and comprehensive [Learning and Caring Plan](#) through an intentionally phased approach. Our plan focused on both supporting student well-being and providing continuation of learning for more than 127,000

students. A plan was developed that respected each family's unique situations and focused on maintaining a caring, safe and inclusive learning environment. To support this, over 20,000 pieces of technology were distributed to ensure that all of our students could access the learning opportunities available to them, and resources and plans were put in place to support all of our learners, including students with special education needs and English language learners.

More information about the Learning and Caring plan as well as tips, resources and supports for students and families to support well-being and online learning can be found at [www.yrdsb.ca/covid19](http://www.yrdsb.ca/covid19) and it is continuing to be updated to best serve our students across the system.

We are all part of a larger community and I am inspired to see the many different ways schools, families and students maintained their connections with one another. It was also moving to see the many inspiring ways our school board, students, staff and families acknowledged our frontline workers and made contributions to the fight against COVID-19. As a school board, for example, we [donated over 145,000 pieces of personal protective equipment](#), including gloves, masks and more. Also, we have both [students](#) and [teachers](#) taking initiative and an innovative role in combating COVID-19.

Each and every one of us has made a difference - in staying home as much as possible and following [public health guidelines](#). I know that this has meant making sacrifices.

To our graduating class of 2020, I know this is not the graduating year you had hoped for. I appreciate that the school closures will not affect your ability to graduate; however, this unique situation and the need to postpone graduations has been disappointing. I remain tremendously proud of all of our graduates and look forward to celebrating this important milestone with you as soon as we are able to reschedule the graduation ceremonies.

In addition, I know that you have missed out on field trips, awards events, athletic banquets, spirit days, assemblies, our annual [Celebrating Student Success awards](#) and the many other ways we extend learning, connect as a community and celebrate the achievements of our students.

We have also been unable to gather together as we normally would in our schools and communities to celebrate or recognize important dates, including Sikh Heritage Month, Pesach, Good Friday, Easter (Western), Vaisakhi, Holy Friday, Orthodox Easter (Eastern), Ridvan, Jewish Heritage Month, Asian/South Asian Heritage Month, Ramadan, Pride, National Indigenous History Month, Italian Heritage Month and Portuguese Heritage Month. As a Board, these dates of significance are important for us to acknowledge and we will continue to celebrate and value the wealth of diversity in our community.

While this learn-at-home experience is unprecedented to all of our students, I trust and believe that this undesired but necessary extended school closure is prudent and best for our community and for the safety and well-being of the students we serve.

As the school year comes to a close, I want to wish you and your families a safe, healthy and happy summer. I look forward to a time when we can welcome your children back into our schools again. We know that families have questions about what the return to school will look like. We will continue to share information with you as it becomes available. In the meantime, we encourage you to continue following public health guidelines and to stay connected.

**Ron Lynn**

Trustee, Markham Wards 2, 3 & 6

York Region District School Board

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## **Supporting Online Learning**

While schools will remain closed for the rest of the school year, we will continue to support your child's learning and well-being. We know that learning at home looks different for each family. We have developed a number of resources and tips to help students and families:

- [How to log in and use online learning platforms](#), including Google, Edsby and D2L. Short videos are also available.
- [Tips for families to support online learning](#).
- [Student Tech Help form](#) for support with student technology provided by the Board and accessing online learning platforms.
- [Mental health](#) and [community resources](#) for students and families.
- [Resources for students with special education needs](#).

To learn more about our [Learning and Caring Plan](#), access these resources and more, please visit [www.yrdsb.ca/covid19](http://www.yrdsb.ca/covid19). Google translate is available on our website.

## **Mental Health Resources**

Jack.org together with Kids Help Phone and School Mental Health Ontario have created a [Youth Mental Health Resource Hub](#) for students to help them in supporting themselves and others around them. They offer various ways of staying socially connected during this time of physical distancing.

COVID-19 has presented unprecedented issues and concerns for our community, our country and the world. As we focus on keeping ourselves healthy and containing the spread of COVID-19, we must also keep ourselves mentally well.

[This link is dedicated to supporting student mental health during this pandemic](#). Resources for students, parents/guardians as well as community resources are listed. In addition, there are various links to YRDSB mental health supports as well as community supports available during the school closure. Please consider taking some time to familiarize yourself with these supports.

[See this link for the 'Here to Help' Phone Line](#) from York Hills available Monday, Wednesday, Friday between 9:30 AM - 4:00 PM to support children and youth (0-18 yrs.) and their parents, caregivers or adult supporters. The Here to Help Phone Line is not a crisis line. If you are in crisis, please contact 310-COPE (1- 855-310-2673), Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868), call 911 or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.

## **Material Retrieval and Return Process**

The board is continuing to work through a process that would allow students access to schools so that they could retrieve their belongings and return any school property. Currently, the board is finalizing details and timelines which will be shared with families as soon as they are ready.

## **Summer Learning Programs**

To help reduce the spread of COVID-19, Continuing Education Services is adjusting its Summer Learning program offerings to align with public health guidelines. Please be advised that our traditional in class face-to-face summer programs **will move to a remote learning delivery model** as per Ministry direction. We will continue to follow Ministry direction and if there are any changes to our program delivery model we will share those changes with you. Teachers will be providing synchronous learning for all summer programs.

Please visit our [Summer Learning Programs webpage](#) to find out about registration dates for a variety of Summer Learning programs.

Students with an entrepreneurial and innovative mindset may be interested in the following course: [Youth Innovation By Design Course flyer](#). This course is one credit and will be delivered online. Eligible students must contact their alpha counsellor prior to registering:

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

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

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

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

### **Assessment Feedback**

Teachers can provide assessment feedback via Google Classroom, TeachAssist, email or telephone. They may release individual task results in TeachAssist without providing an updated course mark every time a task is returned. However, teachers will provide periodic course mark updates as necessary. At the end of June, teachers can use the entire body of evidence that has been collected (formative and summative) to determine a report grade (using both mathematical calculation and professional judgement), being mindful that the final grade cannot be lower than what the student was achieving as of March 13. To determine this final grade, teachers may adjust weightings and adjust or remove assigned tasks, including culminating tasks. Please note that in some cases, it will not be possible or appropriate for teachers to use a course culminating activity. In these cases, teachers may reduce or by-pass the 30% that would normally have been handled through course culminating tasks.

It is our goal to provide students with timely feedback. If you have questions regarding your child's progress, please do not hesitate to contact the teacher directly. Your child's alpha vice-principal is also available to answer your questions regarding assessment and evaluation:

Andrew Gazaneo (A - L) [andrew.gazaneo@yrdsb.ca](mailto:andrew.gazaneo@yrdsb.ca)

Patrick Belmonte (M - Z) [patrick.belmonte@yrdsb.ca](mailto:patrick.belmonte@yrdsb.ca)

### **End of Year Timelines**

Please note that all final exams are cancelled.

Wednesday, June 17:

- Last Day for new learning for evaluation purposes or assignment of new tasks

Thursday, June 18 - Monday, June 22:

- Completion of missing work and Culminating Tasks (if assigned)
- Continuation of regular teacher office hours

Wednesday, June 24: Feedback Day (office hours to be announced)

- Results of culminating tasks (if assigned) and final marks made available to students

### **UHS Student Council Elections**

USAC (Unionville Student Activity Council) has been busy working behind the scenes to prepare for our eventual return to school. We have been considering some organizational changes to the structure and role of USAC and we would like students to offer their opinions and ideas. [Students can provide their input by clicking here.](#)

In light of the current school year and the continuation of learning from home, student council elections for 2020/2021 will be postponed until the fall. Students will receive all the necessary information about the elections once we have a better idea of what school will look like in September.

## **Reading Recommendations from our Librarian, Celeste Lawton**

May is Asian Heritage month in Canada. As the month comes to a close, here are three of my favourite books by Asian Canadian authors.

### ***The Woo Woo: How I Survived Ice Hockey, Drug Raids, Demons, and My Crazy Chinese Family* by Lindsay Wong (non-fiction)**

This is a coming-of-age memoir that deals with mental illness and the immigrant experience in a way that is sometimes shocking to read. Wong doesn't shy away from including all of the details of her experiences. By the end of the book, I had nothing but admiration for her.

### ***Chop Suey Nation: The Legion Cafe and Other Stories from Canada's Chinese Restaurants* by Ann Hui (non-fiction)**

The author takes you on a trip across Canada as she tries to understand the origins of Canada's many Chinese restaurants. At the same time, she uncovers the history of her own family, and weaves her family's story together with the others. It was very interesting to learn about the history of chop suey and Chinese restaurants in this country; Hui's own family history is equally absorbing.

### ***A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki (fiction)**

On a remote British Columbia island, Ruth discovers the diary of 16-year Nao washed ashore inside a Hello Kitty lunchbox. The chapters alternate between Nao's diary and Ruth's life and her reactions to Nao's story. I couldn't put this book down.

- **Other Recommended Reading Lists**

List #1: [25 YA Books Under 200 Pages \(great for reluctant readers\)](#) (Source: MPL)

List #2: [2019 Top 25 Circulating Teen Fiction](#) (Source: MPL)

List #3: [Suggested Reads for High School English](#) (Mix of contemporary and classic; Source: MPL)

List #4: [Books That Promote Tolerance and Diversity](#) (Suggestions for youth of all ages; Source: Common Sense Media)

## **A Community Memory Journal**

To help capture the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Markham community, Markham Public Libraries is calling for submissions of stories, thoughts and experiences that describe how the pandemic has changed your day-to-day lives. The goal is to capture real-life experiences to help us remember the effects of the pandemic on our daily lives. Submissions are welcome in a variety of formats, including, but not limited to journal entries, photographs, memory accounts, blog posts, poems, social media posts, audio recordings, video blogs, hand-written notes, etc. Your submissions will help us remember the experiences from the pandemic, both good and bad, by recording history "as it happens."

Please share your story [here](#). To view existing stories, visit our virtual exhibit [here](#).

## **Markham Creates**

The City of Markham invites all residents to create, engage and share their artistic expressions and be part of a city movement. During a time of social distancing, through the arts, **we can connect**. "**Markham Creates**" is a call to Markham residents or groups to showcase their creativity through a medium of choice: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Exhibit Design and Creative Writing.

Submit for a chance to access exclusive mentorship opportunities with Canadian artists and industry professionals, and to showcase your work in a recognized cultural institution virtually and in person, when allowed!

Click on the "Submission Form" button below to find out more and enter the challenge! Only one application per applicant per category will be considered.

### [SUBMISSION FORM](#)

If you have any questions, please contact [markhamcreates@markham.ca](mailto:markhamcreates@markham.ca).

### **Recognizing Pride Month's Past, Present and Future**

June is Pride Month around the globe. It's a time that many people in the 2SLGBTQ+ community (Two Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, questioning, and additional identities) reflect on the leaders and activism of our past and present, along with the future we are working to create. We invite you and our students to join us in this reflection.

The recognition of Pride Month has roots in the events that occurred in New York City in June of 1969 at the Stonewall Inn. The history of this event is rooted in decades of 2SLGBTQ+ activism responding to police brutality, unjust laws that limited gender expression, and other laws that targeted the 2SLGBTQ+ community. It is important that we remember that many of the leaders of the Stonewall movement were trans women of colour and marginalized youth. The 2SLGBTQ+ community's activism has continued to create supportive environments that benefit all communities. Our YRDSB students often discuss in GSAs (Gender and Sexuality Alliances) how we can create intersectional, inclusive, and welcoming environments for all.

### **Scholarships**

#### **Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association 2020 Scholarship**

The Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association (MACCA) will be awarding Scholarships of \$1,000 to each selected recipient. Selection is based on students' involvement and dedication to their community and academic achievements. One outstanding student that excels in these areas and demonstrates that they have gone above and beyond will receive the President's award. For an application form please contact the Markham African Caribbean Canadian Association (MACCA) or download it from the website: [www.macca1987.com](http://www.macca1987.com)

A complete application should be mailed to MACCA by Friday, June 26, 2020. Interviews will be conducted during the week of July 13 to 17, 2020, and successful candidates will be notified by Friday, August 7, 2020.

#### **The Congress of Black Women of Canada**

The Congress of Black Women of Canada, Ajax/Pickering chapter, is pleased to offer annual \$1,000 scholarship awards to high school and mature students pursuing post-secondary education in the fall 2020. The awards recognize individuals of African or Caribbean descent on the basis of academic achievement, demonstrated leadership and community involvement, and financial need. Payment of the award will be made directly to the student's post-secondary institution.

For more information about the scholarship application such as eligibility and upcoming dates, [please visit this website](#). Complete either the online or PDF version of the application form and submit it no later than May 31, 2020.



# DESIGN YOUR FUTURE BLACK YOUTH LEGACY CONFERENCE

Register for FREE tickets on Eventbrite at: MACCA's Design Your Future: Black Youth Legacy Conference  
Every Wednesday - 7:00pm: May27th- June17th 2020



**@flexoriginal**

**@warrioroheneva**

**@Randeladjei**

**@mentor.whiwh**

Moderator - Amanda Maitland @iam.amanda  
Youth Program Manager - MACCA

Moderator - Ryan Chung @rdotchung- G98.7

**YOUTHREX**  
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2020 Scholarship Application  
Deadline Extended to May 31st

[naccacommunity.ca](http://naccacommunity.ca)

**NACCA**  
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