

Week of November 21, 2022

Upcoming Dates	
Nov. 21-25	Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week
Nov. 28-Dec. 2	Toy Drive for Toy Mountain
Nov. 22	Grade 8 Graduation Trip Planning Meeting 6:00 p.m. (virtual)
Nov. 23	-Dazzling Diamond Spirit Day - dress in school spirit wear or colours (blue, green and/or grey) -Walking Wednesday
Mon. Nov. 28	Gr. 7 and 8 Public Health Immunizations
Dec. 9	Photo Retakes
Dec. 14	Save the Date: VDPS Movie night. More details to follow

Technology Requests

Yesterday, YRDSB sent a [message](#) regarding the notice from CUPE regarding province-wide strike action of full withdrawal of services beginning on Monday, November 21, 2022. As a reminder, if a settlement is not reached and the strike proceeds, schools will be closed to students beginning on November 21, 2022, until the strike action concludes.

If the strike action proceeds, synchronous (live) learning will begin on Monday, November 21, 2022.

We appreciate that some children may require technology and may not be able to participate on the first day. If your child needs to borrow a school Chromebook, please complete this [Technology Request Form](#) by 8:30 a.m. tomorrow (Friday). If we receive a high number of requests, we may initially only be able to provide one device per household.

Technology will be available for pick up from our school office tomorrow and Monday at the following times:

Friday November 17 from 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. and

Monday November 21 from 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week

From November 21-25 we recognize Bullying Prevention and Awareness Week. At our school, it is important that we provide a caring, safe and inclusive environment that supports the academic achievement and well-being of all students. This week serves as a reminder to our school community about bullying and how to respond. During this week students will engage in learning activities that reinforce positive behaviours that respond to and prevent bullying.

Bullying is a form of repeated, persistent and aggressive behaviour directed at an individual or individuals that is intended to cause (or should be known to cause) fear and distress and/or harm to another person's body, feelings, self-esteem or reputation. Bullying occurs in a context where there is a real or perceived power imbalance.

Bullying can take many forms. Some include:

Physical – hitting, shoving, stealing or damaging property

Verbal – name calling, mocking, or making sexist, racist or homophobic comments

Social – excluding others from a group or spreading gossip or rumours about them

Electronic (commonly known as cyberbullying) – spreading rumours and hurtful comments through the use of cellphones, e-mail, text messaging and through social media

Bullying is never acceptable at our school. All members of our school community are encouraged to stand up and support each other. Should there be concerns about bullying or if you have any questions please contact us.

You can also report events that happen at school, at school-related activities, online or off school property if they negatively affect a student or the school climate through [YRDSB's Report It tool](#). This tool is available on the homepage of our school's website or on www.yrdsb.ca. You may also choose to make a report anonymously.

For more [information and resources on bullying and cyberbullying](#), please follow @YRDSB or visit www.yrdsb.ca.

Thank you for helping us create a safe, respectful and inclusive school community.

School Council

Save the Date for the VDPS Movie Night on **Wednesday, December 14**. More details to follow.

Toy Mountain Toy Drive

This holiday season, Viola Desmond P.S. in partnership with our School Council, has decided to stretch our philanthropic legs and jump into supporting a well-known toy drive called Toy Mountain. This initiative is organised by The Salvation Army and CTV, in hopes of creating a mountain of toys for those families in the Greater Toronto Area who are struggling to make ends meet. A group of intermediate students will be leading our toy drive, and with the help of a staff, will be responsible for collecting and promoting this incredible opportunity.

There are a few things that you can do to help this great cause:

1. We are in need of large cardboard boxes to place in each classroom that will act as mini-collection tubs for the toys.
2. We are also looking for transporters to move the collection of toys on **December 8 to LEGO Land Discovery Centre at Vaughan Mills**.
3. **Our week of collection at school will be from November 28 to December 2**, and we would love it if each family was able to bring in a new, unwrapped toy for Toy Mountain. We are specifically looking for items suited for babies, tweens and teens. For a list of potential items, please click this [link](#).
4. Tell your friends and family. This is a great cause for everyone to support.



 Giving Hope Today 

LET'S HELP BUILD TOY MOUNTAIN!

DONATE BY DEC 8TH

School council is happy to announce we have been invited to help build Toy Mountain with CTV news and the Salvation Army again this year!

This is an opportunity to spread some joy and donate to those in need during this holiday season.

We would appreciate if each student could bring in an **unwrapped toy** to collect in their classroom by **December 8th**. Thank you.

Fire Safety

Our grade 1 students participated in a fun workshop on Monday learning all about fire safety. Firefighter Andra from Vaughan Fire and Rescue taught the students about the importance of fire safety including having working smoke detectors in our home and what to do in case of a fire. Another way we are safe and kind at VDPS!



Workshops and Events

The York Region District School Board, in collaboration with Taibu
Community Health Centre

Black Health Alliance: Pathways to Care Project &
Support and Growth, invites you to

Moving Forward Hand in Hand

Parent/caregiver series supporting students of African Caribbean Canadian
Heritage

Free 4-part workshop series for the 2022-2023 school year

Workshop 1 of 4

**Understanding the impacts of anti-Black racism on children and youth mental
health**

November 23rd, 5:00- 6:30 PM

LOCATION: [Thornhill Community Center](#)

November 30th, 5:00- 6:30 PM

LOCATION: [Newmarket Community Center](#)

VDPS Weekly



Ph: (905) 585-0033 & (647) 749-4316 Email: viola.desmond.ps@yrdsb.ca
Twitter: @ViolaDesmondYR

Locations are accessible to persons using mobility devices

Join us for an evening of community, conversation, light refreshments and knowledge exchange.

Please [Register here](#) by November 20th

For more information, please contact the YRDSB Community Care Team School Social Workers for the African Caribbean Diaspora Tracy Thomas-Elleston, tracy.thomas-elleston@yrdsb.ca or Melanie Beckford melanie.beckford@yrdsb.ca .



Introduction to Mental Health 認識心理健康/ 心理健康

This session in Mandarin and Cantonese will help you gain an understanding of mental health, mental health issues, associated stigma and coping strategies and community resources.

這講座將讓大家了解什麼是心理健康、心理健康問題、相關的謬誤、應對策略和社區資源

講座將帮助大家與心理健康相關的一些常見問題以及應對策略和社區資源

To register for a Mandarin session:

[點擊這裡報名普通話講座](#) or scan the QR code



To register for a Cantonese session:

[點擊這裡報名國語講座](#) or scan QR code



HONG FOOK
MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

Parents, Guardians and Caregivers

Join us to learn and share with your community how the families are supported!

Date: **Tuesday, November 29, 2022**

Time: **7-8:30pm**

Location: Google Meet link will be provided upon registration.

Presenters:

Charmaine Tong (M.S.W., R.S.W.)

York Region District School Board
School Social Worker (Chinese Heritage Community)

Hannah Xu (MPH)

Hong Fook Mental Health Association
Youth Program Worker

For more information, please contact:

Community Care Team
School Social Worker
Charmaine Tong
charmaine.tong@yrdsb.ca

Inclusive School and Community Services
Community & Partnership Developer
Pauline Guo
pauline.guo@yrdsb.ca

This free information session is brought to you in partnership with Hong Fook Mental Health Association, Community Care Team and Inclusive School and Community Services of York Region District School Board

Worth Repeating:

YRDSB shared the following Message to Families on November 15, 2022

Re: Masking in Schools and Preparing for Severe Weather

Dear families,

With yesterday's announcement from Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health regarding masking and winter weather approaching, we want to provide families with an update on masking and the steps we take to keep students safe when severe weather occurs.

Masking in Schools

Yesterday, Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health strongly recommended that individuals wear masks in indoor settings. We continue to consult with York Region Public Health, who are [strongly recommending masking in indoor settings](#). York Region schools and workplaces continue to be mask friendly environments and masking is strongly encouraged in YRDSB schools and buildings, and on all forms of school transportation. All students, staff, families and visitors who choose to wear a mask, or who are advised or required to wear a mask will be supported in doing so. A limited number of masks are available; children who wish to wear a mask but do not have access to one, may contact their school.

School Transportation Cancellations

School transportation (buses and taxis) may be cancelled due to extreme cold or inclement weather. On these days, schools will remain open unless otherwise stated. If school transportation is cancelled in the morning, it will also be cancelled in the afternoon. Any special or hot lunch days and field trips will also be cancelled.

Families should use their best judgement to decide whether to send their children to school on extreme cold or inclement weather days. Students will not be penalised for missing school on those days. For safety reasons, please let the school know if your child will not be attending school that day.

School Closures

Emergency closures will be considered when conditions may not be safe for students and staff members to attend school for the full day. This may include events that significantly limit school operations or access to the school site (e.g., widespread, prolonged power failures or downed power lines).

In keeping with our current practice, we will continue to keep our schools open as much as possible. However, it is important that families have alternate childcare arrangements planned for the rare occasions when schools may be closed. Before and aftercare programs will not operate if schools are closed.

Communication to Families

Decisions about school transportation and school closures will be made as early as possible and no later than 6:00 a.m. We will do our best to notify families in advance when we may be considering closing school and Board offices. Transportation cancellations or school closures are communicated through:

- Student Transportation Services - www.schoolbuscity.com or 1-877-330-3001
- [Board](#) and school websites
- [@YRDSB](#) Twitter account
- Radio and TV media outlets

For more information on [severe weather days](#), please visit our website www.yrdsb.ca

School Start-Up Forms

Please complete the School Start-Up forms as soon as possible. We require these forms for many aspects of school programming. They can be found here: <https://startupforms.yrdsb.ca/>



Safety Before and After School

Our school follows a soft entry model. Doors are open from 8:55–9:10 am and staff supervise students indoors. There is no staff supervising outside on the school yard. The expectation is for students to enter the building as they arrive.

- Please do not leave your children unsupervised before or after school. This includes dropping them off at the kiss and ride loop to wait for the bell to ring.
- Please do not allow your children to ride scooters or bicycles on school grounds during arrival or dismissal
- Please do not play soccer on the playground during arrival or dismissal

We have many parents, grandparents and children on our property during arrival and dismissal, and we want to keep everyone safe.