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## Parent Newsletter: January 8th - January 22nd, 2020

### Administration

**Principal:**  
Sheri Epstein

**Vice-Principal:**  
Barbara Caravella

**Vice-Principal:**  
Todd Taylor

### STAY CONNECTED



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**Please check our  
website regularly  
for updates**

NEWS & EVENTS

PARENTS

SCHOOL CALENDAR

ANNOUNCEMENTS

GUIDANCE

### A Message from your Administrators

The start of a new year...

Welcome to 2021! On behalf of the teaching staff and administration of WCI, we hope that you had a chance to disconnect, recharge and relax over Christmas Break. The return to school created some unique challenges, but again, both our students and staff rose to the occasions.

As per the directive of the Ministry, the school building is closed to students and staff. As a result, the easiest way to connect with your child's teacher during this shut down is via email. All YRDSB staff emails are formatted as [firstname.lastname@yrdsb.ca](mailto:firstname.lastname@yrdsb.ca). You can find a list of all WCI staff emails by visiting this [link](#).

Different this semester than a regular semester, there will be no final exams. Instruction will occur up to January 29<sup>th</sup>. And with the switch to fully online learning until the 22<sup>nd</sup> of January, all students are expected to attend all classes, EVERY day. Cohorts do not apply for online learning.

As we move towards Semester 2, a number of changes has required us to rebuild the Semester 2 timetable from scratch. Earlier this week, each students received (to their @gapps account) an email that listed the courses that we have on file now, as requests, and asked students to complete a Google Form by Monday morning (9:00 a.m.), listing any changes that they wish to make. We are collecting this data pro-actively, so that when we are able to attempt to make specific changes to students' timetables we will be ready to go. If a student would like to make a change, it is strongly recommended that they submit their request prior to Monday. There will be an opportunity to request a course change once Semester 2 is underway, but changes will be less likely at that time.

In addition to thinking about courses for next semester, we are also already thinking about courses for next year. Guidance will be providing students with a lot of information, over the next couple of weeks, about course selections for the 2021-2022 school year. Additionally, we will be mailing each student a copy of their Credit Counselling Summary (referred to as a CCS), next Friday. Guidance counsellors will be sharing virtual presentations with teachers next week, explaining the different considerations, the process and the deadlines involve. Please help us stress to your child that we build the timetable for next year BASED ON THEIR REQUESTS. If they want to take a course, they would be best served to request this course at this time.

During the school day, a member of the administration is always available in the Main Office, should you have any questions or concerns.

We thank you for your continued support and patience as we navigate the challenges that arise.

Todd Taylor  
Vice Principal (Surnames M-Z)

**Inspire Learning!**

## News From Guidance

# @WCIGuidance

## Jan. 11 to 22, 2021

WELCOME  
TO  
GUIDANCE



### YOUR GUIDANCE DEPARTMENT MISSION STATEMENT

Support and promote students' well-being and continuous growth in three areas: personal (student) development, interpersonal development, and career development in order to help them develop resilience and realize their potential (success) as individuals and as valuable members of society.

*-Ontario School Counsellors' Association*

### HAPPY NEW YEAR AND HAPPENING NOW

#### Another Shut Down but Guidance is OPEN

Please reach out to your ALPHA Counsellor by email. ***Due to the high volume of emails, please allow for 1 to 2 schools days for a reply.***

Your Counsellor will respond in the appropriate method: email, phone or on-line meeting.

Guidance Counsellors are using Zoom for virtual meetings. If a student sets up a zoom meeting we would prefer the student's camera to be on. Otherwise, a phone call would suffice.

Contact Information: Please note the change to the ALPHA allocation.

Mrs. C. Pearlstein, *Guidance Secretary*  
[cindy.pearlstein@yrdsb.ca](mailto:cindy.pearlstein@yrdsb.ca)

Mr. R. Conte, *Head of Guidance*  
Last Name Alpha: A to H  
[roderick.conte@yrdsb.ca](mailto:roderick.conte@yrdsb.ca)

Mrs. C. Jackson  
Last Name Alpha: I to N  
[cynthia.jackson@yrdsb.ca](mailto:cynthia.jackson@yrdsb.ca)

Mrs. N. Popiel  
Last Name Alpha: O to Z  
[natasha.popiel@yrdsb.ca](mailto:natasha.popiel@yrdsb.ca)

### GRADE 12s! APPLICATION DEADLINES ARE APPROACHING

**Apply to an Ontario college or university?**

**Application Process for both NOW OPEN**

Ontario University: <https://sites.google.com/site/wciguideance/university>

**Application DUE: January 15, 2021**

[@WCIGuidance](#) #wcigrad

Ontario College: <https://sites.google.com/site/wciguideance/college>

**Application Due: February 1, 2021**

[@WCIGuidance](#) #wcigrad

## News From Guidance



**WESTMOUNT WOLFPACK**

Throw Me To The Wolves And I Will Return Leading The Pack

A Message From Your  
Westmount Wolf Pack  
Teacher Advisors

### **GRADE 9 PARENTS AND GUARDIANS – We need your help please**

**It's a NEW YEAR and our Pack Leaders are connecting with our Gr. 9 pups.**

If you are the family of a grade 9 student, please ask them about their Wolf Pack. Ask who their Pack Leader is. Our grade 12 Pack Leaders have reached out to all our grade 9 students, packs have been formed and the mentoring has begun. Please encourage your child to participate and engage with their Wolf Pack and Pack Leader. There is nothing to lose and so much to gain from this important connection and mentor. If your child has not heard from their Pack Leader please send a message to [Roderick.conte@yrdsb.ca](mailto:Roderick.conte@yrdsb.ca) A.S.A.P

Our Pack Leaders will be checking-in and discussing the semester 2 timetable change procedure and the upcoming course selection process. Encourage you child to participate.

[@WCIGuidance](#) #wciwolfpack #wcigr9

### **COMING UP THIS MONTH - Semester 2 Timetable Changes**

As we approach semester 2, the school has started the course verification and timetabling process for semester 2. There is a lot of work to be done so your co-operation and patience is appreciated.

Virtual School Students were sent an email to their GAPPS account on December 18<sup>th</sup> with instruction on how to verify and confirm their semester 2 courses. Confirmation was DUE to their alpha counsellor by end-of-day Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>.

Adaptive Model Students we sent an email to their GAPPS account on January 6<sup>th</sup> with instruction on how to verify and confirm their semester 2 courses. A google form was included in the email so they can request changes if necessary. Forms are due by end-of-day Monday, January 11.

**PLEASE DO NOT EMAIL OR CALL YOUR COUNSELLOR REGARDING YOUR SEMESTER 2 TIMETABLE!**

If you submit your google form, you will be contacted to sort out your timetable at the appropriate time.

For full instruction and updates please bookmark

<https://sites.google.com/site/wciguideance/timetable-changes>

[@WCIGuidance](#) #wcitimetable

## News From Guidance

### **COMING UP THIS MONTH - Course Selection for the 2021-22 School Year**

It's time to pick courses for next year. The process will roll out to our student the week of January 11<sup>th</sup> with the viewing of recording course selection presentations. The guidance team has recorded a custom presentation for each grade. These presentations will outline how to select courses along with tips and important dates. Block 1 teachers will provide class time for the viewing of these presentations.

In the weeks following the viewings, a schedule of "Drop-in Zoom Workshops" for students and opportunities for parent or guardian/student/counsellor meetings will be released and posted on the Guidance website <https://sites.google.com/site/wciguideance/course-selection> and Twitter

**@WCIGuidance #wcicourseselection**

### **Stay connected and "in the Loop"**

Bookmark the [Guidance Department's website](#) It will be the "go-to" for all relevant information pertaining to school for all grades.

Now more than ever, please follow [@WCIGuidance](#), [@WCI\\_YRDSB](#) on Twitter for real time notifications. During this time, social media has become the most effective way of communicating information.

Spread the word. Remind friends and family of the Westmount community to follow us on Twitter.





## Student Mental Health and Addictions Newsletter

### January 2021

YRDSB Mental Health services are provided by YRDSB psychology and social work personnel

#### Returning to Virtual Learning after the Winter Break

As a result of a provincially mandated lockdown due to rising COVID -19 cases across the province, we end the Winter Break with a return to virtual learning. Although this will present a challenge for some and disappointment for others, our focus will be on how to keep one another physically healthy and maintain social connections and mental health while distance learning. This month's edition of our Mental Health newsletter will focus on some suggestions of ways to stay socially connected during this continued time of physical distancing.

Each one of us is unique and may require different strategies to support our mental health. One size does not fit all. The following are some suggestions to help you think about what may help to support your own mental health and the mental health of your children.

Distance learning from home can have positive or negative impacts. One well-supported recommendation is to create a sense of **routine and structure** in the day (as much as possible). For example, try to make the morning routine the same each day, with breaks built in at predictable times.

Other suggestions include:

- Building in positive goals to **incorporate positive pursuits** such as learning something new (e.g. cooking, puzzles), showing gratitude (e.g. reach out to tell someone you care about them), and exercising (e.g. at home or going for a walk).
- [Dr. Shimi Kang](#), a mental health expert and clinical associate professor at the University of British Columbia, suggests that individuals determine 2-3 personal coping strategies that can act as their **own “go to” tools to cope with stress**. Writing this down and making note can make using them intentional. In addition, Dr. Kang reminds us that we should try **to limit our use of technology** where we can. Over dependence on technology/ screens can affect our mental health.
- Lastly, **identify someone you can purposely check in with on a regular basis**, not just during times of stress, but as a measure to maintain social connection. This practice can help maintain positive mental health.

[School Mental Health Ontario](#) has created a variety of resources for educators, parents and families, and students regarding supporting student mental health during this time.

Check out some more tips from School Mental Health Ontario on building [personal resiliency](#).

## Mental Health COVID-19 Page

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.

The [Mental Health COVID-19 page](#) 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.

Continue to check out the [YRDSB website](#) for updated information as well as the Twitter account @YRDSB

**Patricia Marra-Stapleton, M.Sc., C. Psych. Assoc.**

Mental Health Lead

patricia.marra-stapleton@yrdsb.ca