

Blake Street Public School

21 Boulton Avenue, Toronto, ON M4J 1A7

Jennifer Zurba, Principal

Tina Weinberg, Vice Principal

Mary Jane McNamara, Superintendent of Education

Jennifer Story, School Trustee

What a few busy weeks these have been. It has been a joy to meet so many of you, and I want you to know how much I appreciate your warm welcome. I understand that change brings uncertainty and anxiety, and as we move forward in the coming weeks and months, there will no doubt be changes that you may or may not agree with. As a school, our biggest priority at this time is Student Safety. Every year, our school continues to grow in size. What was once a small school with less than 125 students is now a school with over 400 students. This combined with the fact that more than half of the staff in the building are new to the school, means that even the most frequent parent visitors will no longer be recognized. There are many parents and adults in the building throughout the day, many of whom have not signed in at the office. You, our community members, make our school the special place it is, and we want you to know that your involvement and presence is valued and welcomed. **We ask that all parents coming into the school check in first with the office, where they will sign in, and get a visitors pass.** The visitors pass badge will allow all staff to know that you have already been to the office. Parents without visible passes will be reminded to go to the office. We thank you for your cooperation in making the school a safe place for all.

Another concern relates to the number of parents buzzing in the front main doors in the morning. Prior to school entry, and after school closure, there is a constant buzzing of requests to enter through the front doors. This ongoing activity affects Ms. Reashore's ability to do her job. There is no reason to enter through the front doors before 8:45 or after 4:00. Daycare parents who arrive early in the morning, or after school is over, are able to enter through Door 4, using the passcode, and families accessing the breakfast club in the morning are to enter through the gym doors. **Please note that the buzzer will not be answered before 8:45 or after 4:00 when both Ms. Scott and Ms. Reashore are done for the day.** In the event that you have a meeting with a staff member, they will come and let you in from the front doors at your scheduled meeting time. For those of you who have children in daycare or in the Eastview Homework club, **please know that the passcodes will not be operational during the school day.** If you require access to the school during the regular school day, please buzz the front doors and come to the office to pick up a visitor pass.

If you have not yet done so, please be sure to complete your child's forms that were sent home with them the first day of school. As we move forward with email newsletters and communications, it is very important that we have your email address to make sure we can keep in touch with you.

Finally, please note that to accommodate for the Jewish New Year (Rosh Hashonah), the **Parent Council meeting has been rescheduled to Tuesday September 19th at 6:00. We hope to see you there.**

Should you have any questions or concerns with the content of this newsletter, or any other school related issues, please email me directly at jennifer.zurba@tdsb.on.ca

Jennifer Zurba

CAT 4 Testing

Our school is one of the 150 schools that are part of the TDSB's Model Schools for Inner Cities program (MSIC). One of the key components of MSIC schools is the ongoing research to help schools identify the needs of their students and their school community, to monitor the progress made by students, and to demonstrate school improvement over time. In the beginning of the school year (September) –your child (Grades 2, 4 to 6) will take the Canadian Achievement Test

(CAT4) in order to assess their foundation skills in reading, writing and math. The CAT4 test results will be reported to parents and classroom teachers for improvement purposes. If you have any questions about MSIC research in your child's school, or if you do not want your child to participate in any part of the research, please contact me.

Class Placements

As you may know the TDSB is required to be in compliance with the Ministry of Education's

plan to reduce primary class sizes. This means that within the entire TDSB, 90% of Grade 1 to Grade 3 classes will have no more than 20 students with the remaining 10% having no more than 23. Although we always do our best to plan in June for the next school year, there are always factors in September, such as new or departing students, that might affect how classrooms are organized and in which class a child will be placed. If the classes at Blake Street need to be reorganized, the Board will notify us in the coming week. We will keep you

posted.

An Important Message for All Grade 3 Parents

A letter has been sent home through the Friday Folder to all grade 3 parents explaining the Universal Testing that began last year. Please be sure to read the letter and complete the consent letter before returning it back to your child's teacher.

Kindergarten Playground

It's on its way!!! I know that many of you have been patiently waiting for this construction to begin. Construction was delayed because of tree permits, however all is ready to go, and the trees have all been caged to be protected during the course of the build. I anticipate that next week, the construction barricades will go up. They will start at the west wall of the front of the school, go all the way down Boulton and then around Keswick to the staff parking lot. They will leave a walkway to allow for exits during evacuations as well as entry to the breakfast program gym doors. We are hopeful that by the Winter Break, our new Kindie Yard is ready to go and be enjoyed by our students and our community. Entry through the front doors will not be affected.

Curriculum Night

Curriculum Night will take place on Thursday September 28th. There will be two duplicate sessions to accommodate families with more than one child at the school. The first session will begin at 6:30, and the second at 7:00.

Parent council has also organized a Pot luck and welcome back barbecue. See the Parent Council section for more information.

KM Club is Off and Running

Km Club is off and running and is open to all children in grades 1-6. KM Club runs twice a year typically in September/October (leading up to the cross-country meet), and in April/May (leading up to the Track & Field meet). Students who run in KM Club consistently and are interested in either of these two teams, end up having a more

successful event as they have built up their stamina over time. KM Club runs four days a week (Monday – Thursday, with Friday serving as a rain date if needed), and twice a day (8:15-8:25 in the morning, and at morning recess 9:55-10:10). Participation is optional, though most teachers encourage their students to at least walk, as they have noticed that the extra exercise often has an impact on behaviours in the classroom (an added plus)! See you in September out on the 'track'!

Fire and Lockdown Drill

This week we practiced our first fire and lockdown drills. We are required to hold 6 fire drills during the year (3 in the fall / winter, and three in the late winter / spring), as well as one lock down in the early fall, and one in winter / spring. Please be sure to talk with your children about these routines. In the event you are ever trying to access entry into the front doors, you may see a sign that reads "Lockdown Drill". Note that we will not be able to let you in until our lockdown is complete.

Pizza Lunch Update

October will be an exciting month for pizza fans! Our first Pizza Day of the year takes place on Thursday, October 5 with the next one happening on Friday, October 27. If you choose to participate, the cost is \$5 per child for two slices of cheese pizza, cookies, and a drink. The week before each Pizza Day, your child will receive an envelope in their Friday folder which you should return the following Monday with your payment enclosed. I'd also like to remind you of Blake's Munch a Lunch site that launched late last year, which will allow you to pay for Pizza Days online. Our Pizza team is always looking for volunteers to help out for 30 minutes during Pizza lunch--look for additional details with your first Pizza Day envelope.

School Council Update

Parent Council Sub-Committee Leads/Chairs: If you were on a committee and particularly if you were the Chair or Lead on

a Committee last school year, and if you would like to CONTINUE on that committee and/or as the lead, please REPLY to the email below asap. Also, if you can no longer be the lead, but you can talk about the committee at our upcoming parent council meeting, we would also like to know this. Ideally, we would like leads and former leads to speak about the function of each committee to those who come to the first meeting. We would love to recruit as many new faces as possible! So please email blakeschoolcouncil.tdsb@gmail.com with your interest and availability.

We would like to invite you to two exciting events the Blake School Council has planned.

PARENT COUNCIL MEETING: September 19th 6-8p:

Our first School Council meeting of the year. We will have dinner and childcare available, so please come out and meet some new friends and join a committee that will have a major impact and enrich the lives of our students!

At our first meeting, we will be voting to accept the new executive positions. We will be looking for people to join and lead committees, of course, but we are also looking for a Back-Up Recording Secretary. Details are below. If you think you might be interested in volunteering, please email blakeschoolcouncil.tdsb@gmail.com for more details.

Back-up Recording

Secretary: We have a Recording Secretary who is willing to continue in the role this year, but because of her travel schedule, she may have to miss some meetings. We would like to have a Back-up Recording Secretary to assist her if she is not able to attend the meetings. Please reply to this email if you feel you can help with this role.

Details: The secretary is responsible for taking the minutes at the monthly meeting and finalizing these minutes, submitting to council publishing in a timely manner.

**Multicultural Potluck -
September 28th:**

Please join us on Curriculum Night for the first event of the school year. Multicultural Pot Luck and Welcome Back Barbecue. September 28th 6:00 to 7:30 pm. Please bring a dish to share. We will have picnic tables set up in the back. Any questions (or if you know what you want to bring) please email larissabathgate@gmail.com

Please stay tuned for many exciting events this school year. We are excited and look forward to meeting many of you soon.

Transportation portal

For those parents whose children take the bus, a reminder that the transportation link below is helpful to check in with daily to know about any possible bussing delays or schedule changes.

<https://www.torontoschoolbus.org/school-bus-delays/>

Dates to Remember

September 19: First School Council Meeting, 6:00 – 8:00

September 27 – Terry Fox Run and Assembly

September 28: Curriculum Night