

MVMS Newsletter

May 2021

May's CHARACTER ATTRIBUTE:

Integrity

Message from the Principal and Vice-Principal

Principal's Message:

I hope this message finds you safe and well, as I can appreciate, we are all managing through unprecedented times. Despite the ongoing challenges, our students continue to amaze us with their resiliency and perseverance skills as they continue to strive and succeed during virtual learning.

I wanted to provide you with an update for the classroom organization that is being set up for the 2021-2022 school year, assuming everyone is back to in-person learning. Although, we do not have any confirmation yet, we are optimistic and currently planning for a regular school entry with all students returning to in-person learning.

Here is the organization for the start of next school year, September 2021:

- Gr. 6 – 5 English classes
- Gr. 7 - 5 English classes
- Gr. 8 – 5 English classes
- Gr.6/7 – Extended French 2 classes
- Gr.7/8 – Extended French 2 classes
- ISP Autism – 1 class
- ISP Behaviour - 1 class

We have 27.5 teachers returning, which is great news. I am hopefully optimistic to have everyone back at school come September. We will continue to stay tuned with the news for the latest, including any government updates and direction from TPH regarding safety guidelines. Remember to take time to go outdoors for some sunshine, exercise, and enjoy the fresh air in a safe and healthy way.

If you have any questions, please email me directly: jim.stamatopoulos@tdsb.on.ca or your child's teacher. The voice mail at school is picked up regularly and we'll get back to you as soon as possible.

We thank you for your ongoing support and partnership.
Warm regards,

Our staff continued to provide engaging learning opportunities for our students this month.

This past month we celebrated character achievement by recognizing students who have exemplified the true spirit of cooperation at our monthly assemblies. As the new principal, it was a great opportunity to see how talented our students are! A special thank you to our student leaders for organizing and facilitating the recognition assemblies.

Difference Between Cooperation and Teamwork

Isn't they the same thing? Well not really, there's a difference between the two.

The difference between cooperation and teamwork is that cooperation is when you **willingly work** but teamwork is **working together** in a group. Teamwork can **involve** cooperation.



The MVMS Speaker Series continues to be a tremendous success. In April, the Milne Valle School Council welcomed Harvard graduate, Sheliza Jamal who shared her personal story of oppression, conveyed the importance of how language matters, and examined a variety of themes such as implicit/unconscious bias and the fundamentals of anti-oppressive practice. It was an excellent turn out and a great way to engage our families in such meaningful topics. A big thank you to our amazing council organizers Sim Frayne and Aquib Mir for facilitating this community opportunity.

Diversity = Representation

Equity = Justice

Inclusion = Belonging



Upcoming Events

May 2021

- 24 Victoria Day – No School
- 27 School Council Meeting

June 2021

- 4 PA Day – No School
- 5 World Environment Day
- 29 Last Day of School

Safe Arrival

If your child will be absent or late, please call: 416-395-3951.

Kindly leave a message with your child's full name, homeroom number and reason for absence.

You may also contact SchoolMessenger (automated call-out system) directly at 1-833-250-2290 between 7:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. for the current day or a future date.

Jim Stamatopoulos Acting Principal

INTEGRITY

Your child is involved in learning activities designed to develop good character and help children make good choices. Our focus this month will be on INTEGRITY.

What does integrity mean to you?

Your child can show integrity by:

- being honest and trustworthy toward his or her peers, friends, and family members
- admitting his or her mistakes and learning from them
- making the right choices and following through with the appropriate actions

Questions to discuss with your child:

- Discuss the importance of standing by what you believe.
- Tell your child where you stand on important issues, and discuss your reasons for taking that stand.

Projects to do together:

- Brainstorm a list of controversial issues. Discuss both sides of the issue.
- Watch TV shows or movies in which characters show integrity, and talk about the various ways in which those characters acted with integrity.
- Discuss and share examples of situations in which a family member acted with integrity.

Encouraging integrity in your child:

- Talk to your child about what it means to have integrity.
- Encourage and praise your child when he or she shows integrity.
- Provide your child with opportunities to actively engage in discussions that will help develop his or her opinions.
- Encourage your child to think about whether something is ethically right or wrong.

Thank you for supporting our Character Development program.



MVMS Speaker Series

As you know the Milne Valley School Council Speaker Series is well under way and we are excited to announce our next speaker who is former Canadian Pro-Basketball player Antwi Atuahene on May 27th. His story is inspiring, so gather the family and join us for this exciting opportunity. Space is limited so please reserve your spot today by [registering](#).

MILNE VALLEY MIDDLE SCHOOL *Speaker Series*

SUCCESS AGAINST ALL ODDS

FOR PARENTS AND YOUTH

**MAY 27, 2021
6:45PM-7:45PM**

ANTWI ATUAHENE
FORMER PRO BASKETBALL PLAYER
ASST GM & HEAD OF OPERATIONS
NIAGARA RIVER LIONS

followed by school council meeting

SUPPORTED BY
Ontario
PIAC

Success Against ALL ODDS

May 27, 2021: 6:45PM (EST) / School Council Meeting immediately following speaker

Elementary Summer School 2021

The focus of the Elementary Summer School Program is to continue student learning and engagement through the month of July. Programs, embedded in Literacy and Numeracy, are developed by the local summer school Principal to reflect the local school focus. Thirty-eight (38) programs are offered to students in Kindergarten to Grade 8, from July 5 to 30, 2021, online through virtual instruction.

Registration is now open! [Click here](#) for a full list of participating schools and registration information.

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Superintendent: C. Alviani-Alvarez Trustee: T. Doyle
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TDSB Recognizes Children's Mental Health Week

This year, the TDSB recognizes Children's Mental Health Week (CMHW) from May 3 to 7, 2021. To help support student mental health and well-being for all, the Professional Support Services team has developed a wide variety of resources in line with this year's theme of Coping, Caring and Connecting. Please access these resources below and our COVID-19 specific [resources](#).

You can join and follow the conversation on Twitter using #copingcaringconnecting and see how schools are supporting mental health and well-being with their students.

May is Asian Heritage Month

Asian Heritage Month is recognized during the month of May at the Toronto District School Board. Our theme this year is, "Our stories. Our voices. Our journey."

Asia is a land of great political, economic, social, ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity; this diversity creates challenges when we attempt to define Asia in geographic and political terms. More than 40% of TDSB students identify as Asian. During May there will be many opportunities to celebrate the achievements and contributions of Asian Canadians and to recognize the narratives and wisdom of various Asian cultures.

We are pleased to share with you the number of Asian Heritage Month Events being held across the system. A few of these initiatives are listed below.

Jewish Heritage Month in the TDSB

The Toronto District School Board's Jewish Heritage Committee (JHC) is made up of close to 80 staff across every level of the system as well as Trustees. Since its inception in 2015, JHC activities have always been focused around teaching & learning in celebration of Jewish heritage and culture – impactful, innovative, and inspirational work with students in fighting antisemitism, and all forms of hate.

This year, the JHC is pleased to partner with the Asian Heritage Committee for the month of May, Jewish and Asian Heritage months, to present Chicken Soup, Chicken Soup. <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/News/Article-Details/artmid/474/articleid/1629>. This program targeted at students in Kindergarten-grade 3, has been described as a "very sweet book and a perfect early lesson on diversity." As Sophie the main character in the story says about her grandmothers' soups - "a little different; a lot the same".

Earlier this year, in response to the attack on the Capital in Washington on January 6, educators on our Committee quickly mobilized, researched, and added new resources to our website where information is housed for teachers on Holocaust and Genocide Education and combatting antisemitism - <https://sites.google.com/tdsb.on.ca/tdsb-holocaust-and-genocide/home>.

For International Holocaust Remembrance Day (January 27) we, along with partners Liberation75 and USC Shoah Foundation, presented the Canadian premiere of The Tattooed Torah. This short-animated film, based on a true story, engaged TDSB students in grades 4-8. More than 14,000 educators downloaded the film which was accompanied by a Teachers' Guide.

On February 25 our Committee was honoured to partner with the TDSB's African Heritage Committee during African Heritage Month to feature Stronger Than Hate, a live webcast honouring the 761st Tank Battalion, the first all African-American Tank Battalion in World War II. The Battalion was instrumental in helping defeat the Nazis as well as liberating several concentration camps. Thousands of our students joined the conversation to consider what we have learned from history and witnesses to

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genocide and reflect on how that knowledge can help us take action to counteract hate. A website to house information will make sure the conversation continues <https://sites.google.com/tdsb.on.ca/the761stbattalion/the-black-messiah>.

Incidents of antisemitism have risen sharply this past year in our country, our city, and at our schools. B'nai Brith reported an increase in Canada of 18.3%. Toronto Police recently released data that showed a more than 50% increase in reported hate crimes with "the Jewish community, followed by the Black community, LGBTQ2S+ community, and the Asian/Chinese communities the most frequently victimized groups." In February the TDSB released its first-ever Human Rights Annual Report with comprehensive data detailing hate occurrences in our schools, although in different orders, mirrored the Toronto Police data.

Bicycle Safety

With warmer weather approaching, children may be participating in more outdoor activities like bike riding. To help keep children safe while playing outdoors this summer please follow social distancing and all other guidelines provided by Toronto Public Health.

When children are riding their bicycles, parents and caregivers can take steps to protect them.

Here's how:

1. An adult should always supervise children 10 years of age or younger when they are using a bicycle or other wheeled sports equipment. Even older children may need on-going supervision when riding near the road.

2. Make sure children wear the correct helmet properly when they ride. Ontario's bike helmet law requires all children and youth under age 18 to wear an approved bike helmet when riding a bicycle.

3. Keep children away from traffic when they use wheeled sports equipment. Make sure they ride in a safe place.

4. Teach children how to:

a. steer, brake, and ride in a straight line

b. wear the right safety gear, and

c. do a safety check every time they ride a bicycle, scooter, skateboard, use in-line skates or wear shoes with wheels.

5. Be within arm's reach when your children are learning to ride any wheeled equipment.

6. Always walk a bicycle, scooter, or skateboard across a street intersection, instead of riding across.

7. Tell children that you are happy when you see them riding safely.

8. Remind children of the safety rules when they forget.

9. Be a good role model - wear a helmet and safety gear yourself. Children copy what adults do.

COVID-19 Child Benefit

The new [COVID-19 Child Benefit](#) announced in the [2021 Ontario Budget](#) will provide direct payments to families and students to help with additional costs during the COVID-19 pandemic.

If you received a payment through the Support for Learners program, you do not need to apply. Starting on April 26, 2021, the government will begin issuing additional payments of:

- \$400 for each child or youth up to Grade 12
- \$500 for each child or youth up to age 21 with special needs

If you missed applying for the Support for Learners program, you will have the opportunity to apply for this new round of payment. Applications will open from May 3, 2021 to May 17, 2021.

TDSB Celebrates Education Week

We celebrate with schools across the province to recognize Education Week May 3 to 7 and highlight the amazing work and initiatives underway in support of equity and students' well-being and achievement.

The pandemic has continued to have a significant impact on our TDSB community, but in the face of this

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adversity, we have come together to find new ways to connect, collaborate, learn, and support each other.

With that in mind, the focus of this year's provincial Education Week is #StrongerTogether. Join us to share how we are coming together as an education community to support and prioritize the health and well-being of students and staff, engage all students, and maintain connections and support all partners, including parents and families.

Just a few highlights of how we're doing this include:

- Launching the Addressing Anti-Asian Racism: An Educators' Guide
- Encouraging outdoor learning and launched the Taking Learning Outdoors website
- Advocating for vaccine prioritization for education workers so our schools can be safe places to learn and work
- Continuing to plan for the future and approved a 10-year plan to increase opportunities for all students
- Continuing to support families through a variety of forums including the Parents as Partners Conference, Conversation Series, Virtual Drop-In Hours for Mental Health and Well-Being Support.

Taking Learning
Outdoors



Resources for your Family

Families can help support outdoor learning at school and beyond. Time spent outdoors is beneficial to the whole family, improving physical and mental health, and wellbeing. The TDSB encourages families to work together with school administration, educators, and board staff to improve opportunities for outdoor learning for students.

There are lots of great ways to get outside as a family and enjoy the physical and mental health benefits from being outdoors. Outdoor activities can provide a much-needed screen break and can be as simple as taking a walk in your local neighbourhood. During the COVID-19 pandemic, please make sure to follow Toronto Public Health Guidelines when spending time outdoors. [Outdoor Learning](#)

ART CLUB RECENT ARTWORK

Check out some of the recent masterpieces from our super creative students in our Art Club. Well done!



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