

Blake News

The Newsletter of
 Blake Street Public School
 Phone: (416) 393-9415

Blake Street Public School
 21 Boulton Avenue, Toronto, ON M4J 1A7
Jennifer Zurba, Principal **Jackilyn Wallace**, Vice Principal
Marc Sprack, Superintendent of Education **Jennifer Story**, School Trustee



We did it!!!! We cannot thank enough for your support, patience and flexibility this week. It was a first day of school year for the history books, and we feel it went quite smoothly. That has much to do with you reading and following along with the new and different school procedures. **A reminder that you need to sign off every day on the TDSB hardcopy form, which confirms to us that you have screened your child every morning for COVID-19 related symptoms.**

Our successful start is thanks to our caring and dedicated staff, who continue to work hard to ensure your children feel safe, welcomed, and happy at school. This school year, we will continue our school wide focus on self-regulation, and teaching children about their zones and engine speeds. More information will follow in the coming weeks. We will also continue to work around our school wide guiding questions. This year, our theme is identity, and from now until December, all classrooms will be investigating the question: **Who am I and what is my Story?**

As we are trying to minimize item drops offs (late lunches, water bottles, clothing), it is very important that you send your child to school every morning with what they will need for the day.

Leftover Personal Student Items from last school year

At the end of the school year, when all classrooms will be cleaned and emptied, personal student items were bagged and kept in storage over the summer months. Next week, students will be brought to the gym to collect any personalized items belonging to them. Parents are invited to come in to the school, via the gym doors next to the parking lot. Please be sure to social distance yourself in the event that there is a line up. Pick up will only be available Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday morning next week from 8:00 – 9:00 AM. All remaining unclaimed articles will be bagged and dropped off at a local charity.

Safe Arrival

To report your child's absence, please call 416-393-9415 or 1-833-250-2290.

When contacting you to confirm an unexplained absence, the School Messenger system number will appear as 1-833-250-2290. Please make sure to answer the call and acknowledge the absence in order to stop the automated phone calls.

Bussing

Bussing for approved French Immersion students begins on **Monday, September 21st**. If you have not yet logged on to the TDSB portal, please be sure to do so at

<https://busplannerweb.torontoschoolbus.org/>

This will allow you to receive automatic messages relating to bussing delays or time changes.

Bus routes have been and are as follows:

SCHOOL NAME	AM PICK UP TIME	PM DROP OFF TIME
Thornccliffe Park	7:24 (PFT0133)	3:39(PTF0133)
William Burgess	7:34 (PFT0133)	3:31 (PTF0133)
Chester	7:41 (PFT0133)	3:25 (PTF0133)
Frankland	7:48 (PTF0133)	3:20 (PTF0133)
Wilkinson	7:56 (CSC0877)	3:10 (CSC0877)
Roden	8:06 (CSC0877)	3:01(CSC0877)

To assist elementary students to be prepared for the bus in this new COVID world, some very brief videos can be found at: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Return-to-School/Resources-for-Preparing-for-Back-to-School>

Uke and Junior Students A Note from Melanie and the Uke Instructors

Grade 5 and 6 Students: There are quite a few Blake families for whom Melanie does not have an email address. If you didn't get her message about the online classes that begin late September, you are probably one of them. Email her and get on the list.

doaneuschool@gmail.com If you somehow do not have a uke at your house, contact Melanie and she'll help you.

Grade 4 - Sorry, but you will have to wait until classes can start in person. Hopefully, that will be in January. I am sad for you. 🙁

Virtual Schooling

For parents of children attending virtually, school will begin on Tuesday September 22nd. By now, you should have received an introductory email. More details will be forthcoming.

Please note that virtual schooling is organized at the central level – not at Blake St PS. The email you should have received is below:

September 14, 2020

Dear Virtual School Parents/Guardians,

As you know, we recently delayed the first day of the Virtual School until Thursday, September 17 given the time needed to assign teachers and timetable our secondary classes. Since that decision was made, the number of families choosing the Virtual School has continued to grow — largely from families switching from in-person learning. Between Tuesday of last week and today, we have gone from approximately 66,000 students to more than 72,000 students in the Virtual School resulting in the addition of more than 200 virtual classrooms — all requiring a teacher.

With this number expected to grow, we have made the difficult decision to once again postpone the first day of Virtual School to Tuesday, September 22 to allow time to finish the staffing and timetabling process. This will also

provide time for students and their families to set up BrightSpace accounts and familiarize themselves with the online learning platform that will be the main hub for the TDSB Virtual School. Please note that this delay will also apply to students in Special Education ISP classrooms.

We had hoped that our first communication with Virtual School parents/guardians would have been under different circumstances, however it became clear over the weekend, especially with increasing numbers, staffing a Virtual School of this size — larger than the total enrolment of most school boards in Ontario — was not going to be possible in time for Thursday and we wanted to inform you right way. Other large school boards in the Greater Toronto Area have come to similar conclusions and have recently announced a delayed start to virtual classes.

In the days ahead, we will be sharing additional information with families about the TDSB Virtual School as we prepare to welcome back students. I want to thank you for your patience as we move through this process. I know the waiting is not easy, but this additional time will allow us to better prepare for your children's return to school.

Sincerely,



Carlene Jackson
Interim Director of Education

TDSB Psychology Newsletter

Please take a moment to read through the first version (2020-2021) of the attached newsletter, Hearts & Minds, which is being shared by the TDSB's Psychological Services department. All previous issues can be found on the TDSB Psychological Services website, along with some information about the Psychology department. <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Professional-Support-Services/Psychological-Services>

For those celebrating the Rosh Hashonah, the Jewish New Year, we wish you Shana Tova!!!!
Have a wonderful weekend.

Jenn and Jacki

Updates from Toronto Public Health

Dear Parent or Legal Guardian:

Re: Safer Holiday Planning During COVID-19

With religious holidays and Thanksgiving approaching, here are some reminders to keep everyone as safe as possible. Remember to:

- Wash your hands often and stay home when you are sick.
- Keep two metres distancing from others not part of your household.
- Wear a mask or face covering, in indoor public places.

- ☐ Wear a mask or face covering when physical distancing is difficult with others that are not part of your household.
- ☐ Avoid touching your face. Cover your cough or sneeze with inner elbow or a tissue.
- ☐ Clean and disinfect high touch surfaces.
- ☐ Download the COVID Alert app.

Avoid non-essential travel

There has been an increase in COVID-19 among people who recently travelled in Canada and abroad. Restrictions on non-essential travel between the U.S. and Canada are still in place. All travellers returning from outside of Canada need to self-isolate for 14 days.

Have guests from out of town?

If you have relatives or friends travelling to Canada to celebrate the holidays with you, please remember that they are required to quarantine for 14 days. See Government of Canada website on travellers entering Canada.

Keep gathering sizes small

Smaller, outdoor gatherings are safer than indoors. Reserve close contact to members of your household and essential supports, and keep a physical distance and wear a mask from everyone else. Add a virtual event to include family and friends from out-of-town and anyone who is feeling unwell. This year, avoid buffet style food service. Instead, serve food on individual plates to avoid passing and touching items.

For more information, please visit toronto.ca/covid19 or call us at 416-338-7600.

Yours truly,

Nicole Welch BSc. MSc. RN

Toronto Public Health Director

Notes and Updates from Parent Council

Hello everyone, Lanrick Bennett Jr, Chair for Blake Street PS's Council. March Break seems like it happened forever ago. It's been a long summer. Welcome back to Blake. We know lots of parents and caregivers are concerned and want to support the teachers and the school, so we would like to invite everyone to our first official Council meeting. It will be held on Zoom on Wednesday, **September 23rd 6.30pm to 8pm**. If you are interested in attending the council meeting, please RSVP to me at lanrickbennettjr@gmail.com so I can forward you the link.

We will have an agenda for the evening however I need to stress that Council is bound by TDSB rules and regulations regarding funding. Please review the letter sent to the School Council from Associate Director Karen Falconer on Monday, September 14th.

This message is being sent on behalf of Associate Director Karen Falconer

Parent/Caregiver engagement and partnership remain a high priority for TDSB schools.

As the TDSB implements the return to school plan, staff is focusing collective efforts on the continuation of learning and the well-being of students and staff while doing our best to stay connected to family/caregivers and School Councils.

We recognize it is not business as usual for anyone and some families may face barriers to their participation in School Council meetings and other activities. We must try to balance these different realities in our approach as School Councils engage in activities this school year.

TDSB staff and the Parent and Community Engagement Office (PCEO) acknowledge the work of the Parent Involvement Advisory Committee (PIAC) in supporting School Councils and schools in developing a common understanding and direction of School Council continuation and operations.

With these important considerations in mind, the following protocols are effective immediately for School Councils:

Communication

- All Principals will connect and communicate with School Council on return to school plans prior to re-opening;
- All Principals will endeavour to connect and communicate with their school community on return to school plans prior to re-opening;
- SC Messenger and ZOOM will be provided by TDSB during the month of September for School Councils to enable School Council chairs/co-chairs an opportunity to become oriented with the tools.

Meetings

- School Council executive and working group meetings may be held;
- School Council meetings may be held or postponed until October, 2020;
- The existing school council membership remains in office until the date of the first meeting of the School Council after the elections (under Education Act, O. Reg. 612/00: School Councils and Parent Involvement Committees).

Elections

- With 14 days notice, elections of parent members of School Council will be held within 30 days after school re-opening, which will be by the week of October 19, 2020 where feasible;
- All other election/appointment of School Council members may be held during the week of October 19, 2020 where feasible.

Fundraising

- All school council fundraising except for the School Cash Online and online donation module and in-kind donations in compliance with TDSB fundraising policies and procedures, will be postponed until November 1, 2020. Information on cash online donation can be found at: <https://tdsb.schoolcashionline.com/Fee/Details/457/153/false/true>
- For safety reasons, TDSB cannot allow fundraising for HEPA air filters; HVAC related items. The rentals and/or purchase of tents is also not permissible at this time.
- It is important to note that the TDSB has been working over the summer to review building ventilation and filtration systems and is implementing a number of strategies to improve ventilation in our schools and increase the volume of fresh air to the maximum extent possible.
- We continue to follow our practice which prohibits fundraising for anything the government would typically cover. In the coming weeks, we will be providing additional guidelines to help support schools and School Councils with regard to fundraising and school council operations.

Please note that TDSB is consulting with PIAC and education partners and stakeholders on how School Councils will include families whose children were previously attending the “bricks-and-mortar” in-person school but are currently registered in The Virtual School.

During these unprecedented times, we are called upon to act and pivot where necessary to respond to our changing environment. We will reassess this direction around School Councils within the next few weeks.

Thank you for your continued understanding.

On October 6th, we will be holding a Blake Council election for the executive positions (Co-Chair, Co-Treasurers and Co-Secretary). If interested, the job descriptions are below:

Chair / Co-Chair

The chair (or co-chair if this role is shared) acts as the primary representative of the School Council and leads the School Council meetings. The chair/co-chair will:

- arrange for meetings;
- prepare agendas;
- chair council meetings;
- ensure that minutes of council meetings are recorded and maintained;

encourage consensus among School Council members & facilitate the resolution of conflict;
establish sub-committees when deemed advisable;
communicate with the school principal on behalf of the council.

Secretary

The secretary records and distributes meeting minutes. The secretary will:
record the meetings and type up the minutes
make note of actions promised and planned
distribute the minutes to the chair, co-chair, and principal
post the minutes, once approved in a public place for the parents and staff to read

Treasurer

The treasurer keeps proper records of all monies that are collected and spent by the school council. The treasurer will:
record all financial transactions,
present quarterly and year-end financial statements to the council
follow standard reporting and accounting procedures

You can find executive nomination forms here <https://drive.google.com/.../1Flt3VJe2cgd-onkJ5MbAhnCFd.../view...>

You can review the by-laws for the upcoming vote and to become a council member <https://docs.google.com/.../1Ws5RLKC9DjD25HAUcjsFvEiuK2.../edit...>

Parents who would like to be voting members, your forms are here https://docs.google.com/.../13qqvubirQEJun6kFfFO_tJ3T3E.../edit...

You do not need to be a voting member to attend School Council

We look forward to seeing all of you next week during the Council meeting, and hope the first week back at school went well.

Cheers,
Lanrick

Virtual Swap

Blake has started its very own virtual clothing swap. Please go to facebook and join. Everyone is welcome. search: Blake Street PS Virtual Swap.