

DMCI 19/20 Newsletter #29

If you are aware of members of our school community who do not have Internet or electronic devices, please share this important information with them via a safe method, such as telephone.

Greetings from Don Mills Collegiate Institute

Hopefully you and your family are coping with this unprecedented situation. Everyone's health is the top priority. Resources to maintain health can be found at the end of this message.

Contact with School Staff

Teachers and support staff - including social worker, Child and Youth Worker and secretarial staff may be contacted via email. If you are unable to email, voicemail messages may be left at the school number, 416-395-3190, ext. 20000. Messages are retrieved daily by our Office Administrator and then distributed to appropriate staff.

I also invite you to email me, Mr. Bushell, Principal, at todd.bushell@tdsb.on.ca if I can assist you in any way or if you are unable to use email, voice-mail messages can be left at 416-395-3190, ext. 20010.

Our Vice Principals, Ms. Sivarajah, student last names beginning with letters A - L, and Ms. Evans, student last names beginning with letters M - Z, can also be reached via email. Messages can also be left via voicemail.

Ms. Sivarajah - praveena.sivarajah@tdsb.on.ca or 416-395-3190, ext. 20011

Ms. Evans - gillian.evans@tdsb.on.ca or 416-395-3190, ext. 20012

Letters from Minister of Education and TDSB Director of Education

Earlier this week, you should have received letters from the TDSB Director of Education and the Minister of Education. These letters are attached here for your reference.

Getting Ready for Distance Learning

Students are requested to check their TDSB email daily and all other platforms used by DMCI teachers, such as Google classroom, and to respond to teacher requests within 24 hours on school days as we gear up for the April 6th launch of distance learning.

Phase Two of Distance Learning Begins Monday, April 6

Beginning Monday, April 6, students are expected to begin completing work that is posted or distributed by DMCI teachers. Students should expect to spend approximately three hours per course per week. We understand that in many situations multiple people are sharing an electronic device which means that our students may not be able to access assignments, information and lessons from a teacher at a particular day and time. At the same time, students should make every possible effort to access information posted or emailed by teachers at least once per school day. If students are having difficulty completing course work

for any reason (i.e. family responsibilities, technology issues etc.) they should contact their teacher immediately to work on a plan to address any issues.

Request for Technology - Survey

TDSB has requested that all parents complete a survey about what type of technology their children have at home. [Click here to access the survey](#). Please ensure that you complete this survey this week if you have not done so already. TDSB is centrally assessing what technology students are able to use. Please complete the survey even if your teen has already completed a separate survey with their teachers. **We still await further direction from TDSB as to TDSB plans to support students without a device or an Internet connection. We understand that until a method of instruction is implemented for students without Internet or a device, these students will be unable to complete course work. Students will not be academically penalized due to lack of a device or Internet connection.** The one important exception to this is SEA Equipment. TDSB indicated to Principals today, April 3, that students with Special Education needs who have SEA equipment will at some point be receiving a computer. More information will be provided when it becomes available.

Graduating students

The Ministry of Education has indicated in a memo to teachers that "a priority will be placed on students scheduled to graduate this year and any student on track to graduate will be supported to graduate." They have indicated that an April mark will be submitted to the Ontario University Applications Centre. (More information below is available on this topic.) The memo further indicates that, "Discussions are being held with colleges and universities about the adaptations required to support the admission process for students applying for post-secondary education, and further information will be provided."

As indicated by the Ministry of Education, "We want to be clear: graduating students should not have their graduation or progression impacted by the developments surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic. We are working in close cooperation with the Ministry of Colleges and Universities and sector stakeholders to ensure no student's graduation or transition to post-secondary is jeopardized as a result of the school closure period.

The graduation requirement to complete 40 hours of community involvement is suspended for this school year. Community involvement hours that have been completed should be reported on the report cards of graduating students. Graduating students should be encouraged to complete their hours wherever possible, where the health and safety of the student can be assured."

Student Marks

The Ontario University Application Centre has so far indicated that they will require an April mark for Gr. 12 students as per their usual schedule. The Ministry of Education has indicated that April marks will be given for Gr. 12 students. This means that teachers will be providing these marks for Gr. 12 students in just over 2 weeks. This mark will be primarily based on work completed in school prior to the March Break and will also include one or more evaluations given during the Distance Education period which begins April 6.

DMCI will work diligently to ensure that our students are not negatively impacted by these submission requirements.

For students in Grades 9 - 11, an official midterm mark will not be provided as per Ministry of Education instruction to schools.

For all students a **final** report card will be provided in June/July.

This mark will be calculated based on the following:

1. Evaluations completed during the in-school period of Jan. 31 - March 13
2. Evaluations completed during the Distance Learning Period beginning April 6
3. Evaluations completed upon the return to school for this school year (if applicable).

[Learning at Home](#) and [TDSB on-line Resources](#)

About two weeks ago, the Ministry of Education and TDSB posted online resources so that students could continue their learning. While these resources are excellent for many subjects and can provide excellent learning for students, it should be noted that any work completed by students using these sites will not be evaluated by teachers and will not be included in the calculation of their mark at any point, including the final mark.

Mental Health and Well-being

There are general resources and articles for families about how to cope with the pandemic which can be accessed at: www.tdsb.on.ca/ .

The What's Up Walk-in Clinics offer OHIP covered, walk-in counselling for children and youth. These agencies are now shifting to video and telephone-based service instead of in-person counselling. Information for What's Up Walk In-services are below:

<https://www.whatsupwalkin.ca/>

In addition, an excellent resource continues to be the Kids Help Phone (1-800-668-6868, or text CONNECT 686868).

TDSB Virtual Library

This is a link to a [Learnmark](#) that has passwords to resources that vendors have temporarily opened up that can be found on the Virtual Library. Please remember that these resources are only for TDSB Families must not be to be shared or posted online.

Please note that there is a new link on the right hand side of the Virtual Library. This link has two functions. It allows families to request a Learnmark and provides an easy access point for students to login to the Learnmark with their TDSB login.

Respite Services and other resources

For families require respite services, information can be found following this link Respiteservices.com.

For any safety and emergency issues related to students, parents may consider calling 911 for Police support.

Respite Services for any students with varying needs:

Contact <https://www.>, 416-322-6317 x 1.

Complete the family registration form. Rates go from \$17-20 hourly however for students with challenging behaviours, rates higher may apply.

Below is an option for families in need at this time in TORONTO only for students with challenging behavioural challenges and require intensive respite supports (Please note that TDSB does not endorse private agencies).

For immediate respite supports contact <https://wmanda.com/>

Other resources for parents:

Podcast for ADHD and coronavirus info: <https://additudemag.>

Anxiety and COVID-19

Coping with Coronavirus (Covid-19)

Live: learn scientifically proven strategies for coping with COVID-19 inspired anxiety.

Thursday March 26, 4pm EASTERN standard time (1pm PACIFIC standard time)

<https://www.anxietycanada.com/>

Mindfulness for Families and other resources: Community Living Toronto has compiled some resources to assist the families we support as they cope through these trying times which can be found at <https://connectability.ca/>.

We will get through this together. Please do not hesitate to contact our staff or me if we can be of assistance.

Sincerely,

Mr. Bushell, Principal