



# The Dragon's Lair

November 2021

## Administrators' Message

We are off to a great start to our school year at Donwood Park!

Progress reports were sent home to parents on Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> and parent-teacher interviews took place on Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> and Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup>. Parent-teacher interviews are a great way to connect with your child's teacher(s) to see how your child is progressing, to ask questions and to discuss areas for growth and what you can be doing to support your child's learning at home. Classroom teachers spend each school day with your child, but parents play a very important role in sharing information about their child. Regular parent-teacher communication is an integral part of student learning and your support is critical to the ongoing success and well-being of our students (your children). In addition to parent-teacher interviews, you can request a meeting at any time during the school year by contacting the school or your child's teacher directly.

The cold weather has arrived! Please ensure that your child comes to school prepared for the cold – winter coat, hat, mitts/gloves and scarf. If your child forgets a hat or a pair of mittens, we have extra ones in the office that we can give him/her.

Remember to check your child's backpack on a regular basis, as forms, and/or notes are sent home with your child throughout the school year. Notices/letters sent home for the entire school will usually be sent home via email or if a paper copy is sent home for our In Person learners, it will be sent home with the youngest child only, to help reduce the amount of paper used and the duplication of messages. \*All newsletters and monthly calendars

will be sent home via the School Connects email system. Should you require a paper copy, please let the office know.

## School Council

Our School Council Executive for the 2021-2022 school year is as follows:



**Chair: Nedja Balog**

**Co-Chair: Shehnaz Motara**

**Secretary: Yasmin Shaikh**

Congratulations to our new School Council Executive! They are already busy planning fundraising events and school wide events! More information to come.

Parents are welcome to attend School Council meetings as often as you can. Meetings take place **monthly**. Please look for dates and times on the school calendar. Our next School Council meeting is Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 p.m. on Zoom, a link will be sent to families prior to the meeting date.

## November is Indigenous Heritage Month

November is Indigenous Education Month at the Toronto District School Board. It is important to centre First Nations, Métis and Inuit histories, contemporary realities and voices. For classrooms across the TDSB, this is an opportunity to learn from Indigenous perspectives on treaties, Indigenous leadership, achievements, resistance and creativity.

Truth and Reconciliation is a guiding principle at the TDSB. Throughout November, students, staff and community members will engage in meaningful opportunities to learn together about our shared histories and to build stronger relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples.

The Urban Indigenous Education Centre (UIEC) will be hosting a number of events to support students and staff to learn from Indigenous Peoples.

Please see the calendar of events for details and links to myPATH to register for each event. Follow @UIEC\_TDSB on Twitter for updates on Indigenous Education Month at the TDSB. Important Dates for Indigenous Education Month

Treaties Recognition Week: November 1 - 5  
International Inuit Day: November 7  
Indigenous Veterans Day: November 8  
Louis Riel Day: November 16

### **Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement – Community Consultations**

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement in collaboration with select community partner organizations are facilitating a series of community consultations. Community members and parents of students who self-identify as Black are invited to register for a virtual session. The upcoming date is November 23<sup>rd</sup> from 6 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. For more details and to register, visit: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/cebsa/community-engagement>

### **November is Hindu Heritage Month at the TDSB**

The Toronto District School Board (TDSB) is proud to recognize Hindu Heritage Month during the month of November as the Board of Trustees voted to pass a motion in April 2018 to mark this time. On December 8th, 2016, the Province of Ontario passed the Hindu Heritage Month Act by declaring

that the month of November in each year is proclaimed as Hindu Heritage Month.

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/News/Article-Details/ArtMID/474/ArticleID/1716/November-is-Hindu-Heritage-Month-at-the-TDSB>

### **PIAC Conference**

Join us for the PIAC Parent Conference! Save the date for November 27 and 28 for the PIAC Parent Conference. Bridging the Gap is a two day virtual event with speakers and workshops focused on bridging the gap in our schools in mental health, parent engagement and school councils. Engage with other parents and caregivers from across the TDSB as we learn and share best practices on reconnecting mentally and socially with ourselves, students, schools and communities. More information will be available online at [www.torontopiac.com](http://www.torontopiac.com)

### **Remembrance Day**

On Wednesday, November 11<sup>th</sup> students and staff at school and across the marked Remembrance Day with classroom



activities and school assemblies. During this week, our staff and students explored why we have Remembrance Day and what it means to us while promoting peace within our school community and beyond.

### **Facility Update**

Our Donwood Campus gym has received a refresh with a fresh coat of paint! We have removed outdated items from the gym walls and proudly hung a new school banner! Next, we look forward to our new stage curtains being hung. We are always working at improving our facilities.

## Travelling To and From School

Thank you to the many families who have been walking with their children to and from school this school year. With the back field and our pathways finally open behind the school, this has made travelling back and forth to school so much easier and faster for our families. This has also helped to reduce traffic congestion around our school during drop off and pick up times which has made drop off and pick up go more smoothly in our parking lots and surrounding streets.



Remember, do not park in the bus loading zone on Highbrook Drive as our school buses need to use this zone to drop off and pick up students. Parking in this zone is illegal. We know that traffic congestion can be frustrating for parents, however if you choose to drive instead of walking, parents are expected to act responsibly and respectfully with each other, especially when they are stuck in traffic around the school or in our parking lot. You need to expect congestion during both drop off and pick up times at the school, as these are the busiest time of the school day for traffic. We continue to work in partnership with Toronto Police Services and our local Traffic Enforcement Officers to assist with congestion and safety on the roadways surrounding the school. Please ensure you are adhering to the signs posted and the laws of the road.

To learn more about Road Safety, please visit: [www.tdsb.on.ca/Road-Safety](http://www.tdsb.on.ca/Road-Safety).

## Punctuality

Learning to be punctual is a skill that students **must** develop in order to be successful at school. It is disruptive for students and teachers when students arrive late to class. Valuable learning takes place at the very beginning of the morning and afternoon that tardy students miss.



**Students that arrive in class after 8:45 a.m. and/or 12:35 p.m. are late.** If students are consistently late, the classroom teachers and/or office staff will be following up with parents. If the student continues to arrive at school late, or there are frequent absences (10+), a letter will be sent home to parents from the Principal to further address this area of concern.

### Student Safe Arrival Program



**Please remember to call 416-396-6200 or 416-396-6201 to report students' late arrivals and absences.**

It is important that parents call the school when a student will be late or absent from school.

If your child arrives to school late (after 8:45 a.m. or 12:35 p.m.), please ensure that they go to the office to get a late slip. If your child does not check in at the office when they are late, the School Connects system will call out to your home as the teacher's attendance form will indicate that your child is absent.

### Lunch Supervision

Our lunch hour is a very busy time! If parents are at home during the lunch hour we highly encourage that students go home for lunch, **students are to return to school after 12:15 p.m.** prior to afternoon classes. Going home at lunch time is an opportunity for students to take a break

from the hustle and bustle of the school day and a chance to relax and reconnect with their family while enjoying a homemade lunch.

**Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week**  
**November 15-21**

Bullying Awareness and Prevention Week helps to promote safe schools and a positive learning environment. At our school we will be using this week to continue to promote a positive school climate. Daily announcements relating to bullying awareness and prevention will provide information and topics for class discussions. As well, resources will be provided to our teachers for in-class activities. Bullying Prevention/Awareness is not a week-long event, it is an ongoing discussion within our classrooms, our school and our community.

Each week we continue to remind our students of the three steps to problem solving to help them when conflicts arise.

- 1- Tell the person, "Stop! I don't like what you're doing."
- 2- If the problem continues, walk away.
- 3- If the problem still continues, go and find a staff member for help in solving the problem.

These three steps also guide our discussions with students when problems arise. They have been very helpful when students are trying to solve conflicts that occur, as well as when they are reflecting on their actions after a problem has happened.

Problem solving skills and bullying awareness/prevention are conversations that also need to happen on an ongoing basis at home. All of us have an important role in keeping our schools safe - parents, educators and students.

**VRP - Volunteer Reading Program**

Our Grade 1/2 Volunteer Reading Program (VRP Program) has recently started. Our VRP Volunteers are providing



this support to our students virtually this year. Many thanks to our VRP volunteers and Mrs. Reid for your support, this program truly makes a difference for our young readers!

**Stay Healthy**  
**During Flu Season**



Flu season is here again! In Canada, flu season tends to run between October and April.

The Ontario government is encouraging Ontarians to avoid getting sick this flu season by getting their annual flu shot.

**Helpful tips to avoid the flu:**

- Get your flu shot
- Wash your hands often
- Cover your cough/sneeze
- Stay home if you're sick

Visit [toronto.ca/health](http://toronto.ca/health) to find a free flu clinic near you

416.338.7800 [toronto.ca/health](http://toronto.ca/health) | Toronto Public Health

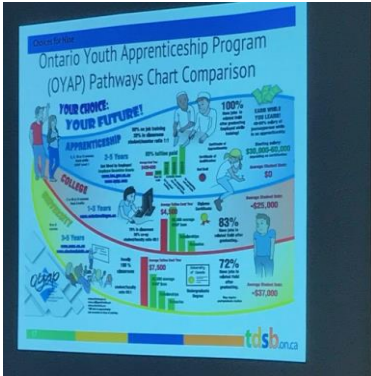
Toronto Public Health is recommending that whenever students and staff experience flu-like symptoms, they are sent home and do not return to school until they are no longer infectious to others. Therefore, ill students and staff should be symptom-free (especially from vomiting and diarrhea) for at least 48 hours before returning to school.

The primary concern is for the health and safety of all students and staff. Everyone should do their part to stop the spread of the flu. As parents, you can also assist by:

- reminding your children to wash their hands often especially after using the washroom and before and after eating;
- reminding your children to cover their sneeze and cough using their arm, not their hands;
- watching for symptoms of vomiting, diarrhea, dizziness, and/or high fever;
- informing the school if your child is ill;
- keeping your child at home when he/she is ill.

For more information, please visit the Toronto Public Health website [www.toronto.ca/health](http://www.toronto.ca/health), contact your family doctor, or call Telehealth Ontario at 1-866-797-0000.

## High School Information Nights



To help you make an informed decision when choosing a high school for your child, TDSB schools host information nights for parents and grade 8 students each school year

between October and January. Learn everything you need to know about the incredible variety of schools, programs and courses. The dates and times for all High School Information Nights are available online at <http://www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/Going-to-High-School/Open-Houses-and-Information-Nights>.

Donwood Park will be hosting a *Grade 8 to 9 Transition Information Virtual Session* for Grade 8 families on Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> at 5:30 p.m. Information regarding this webinar has been sent to all of our Grade 8 families via email.



<b>School Council Meeting</b>	<b>November 16</b>
<b>Progress Reports Sent Home</b>	<b>November 17</b>
<b>Parent-Teacher Interviews</b>	<b>November 18 (evening)</b>
<b>Parent-Teacher Interviews</b>	<b>November 19 (morning)</b>
<b>P. A. Day</b>	<b>November 19</b>
<b>Grade 8 to 9 Transition Session for Gr. 8 Families</b>	<b>November 23</b>
<b>Kindergarten Kindness &amp; Caring Assembly</b>	<b>December 1</b>
<b>Donwood Spirit Week</b>	<b>November 29-Dec. 3</b>
<b>Gr. 1-8 Kindness &amp; Caring Assembly</b>	<b>December 7</b>
<b>School Council Meeting</b>	<b>December 7</b>
<b>Winter Holidays</b>	<b>Dec. 18-January 2</b>

<b>Principal</b>	<b>Andrea Lane</b>
<b>Vice Principal</b>	<b>Thanasi Dimakas</b>
<b>Superintendent</b>	<b>Kurt McIntosh</b>
<b>Trustee</b>	<b>David Smith</b>
<b>Office Administrator</b>	<b>Sophie Guarnaschelli</b>
<b>Secretary</b>	<b>Michelle Andersen</b>
	<b>Sinead Meechan</b>
<b>Head Caretaker</b>	<b>Peter Panourgias</b>



**DONWOOD PARK  
PUBLIC SCHOOL**

Visit

our school website at:

[www.donwoodpark.ca](http://www.donwoodpark.ca)

Follow us on Twitter at **@TDSB\_Donwood**

