

The Dragon's Lair

October 2022

Administrators' Message

Thank you to our students, parents and staff for all of your support as we worked together to settle back into our school routines and expectations over the past month and a half. It is hard to believe that we have almost finished 6 weeks of school already! We are off to a great start!

Thank you to our many families who attended Curriculum Night. It was wonderful to see so many of our families and to be able to host Curriculum Night in person at our school once again. Curriculum Night is a great way to connect with school staff, learn more about your child's classroom program, the routines and expectations that are in place, and to ask the teachers questions around programming and/or the curriculum. We encourage you to keep these lines of communication open throughout the school year as our staff works in partnership with our parents/guardians/caregivers to support our students' learning and overall well-being.

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 most often be sent home via email, with paper copies only being sent as needed. *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.

COVID-19 Screening Guidelines

Although we are returning to many of our school routines and activities such as in-person assemblies and co-curricular activities and events, it is important that families continue to screen their children before they come to school. Ensuring the health and safety of our students and staff is a priority and everyone plays a role. The most important thing families can do to help mitigate the transmission of COVID-19, is to screen their children daily for any COVID-19 symptoms and follow the updated screening guidelines. All staff and visitors are also expected to have screened themselves before entering a TDSB building.

Learn more at: <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/994c-Screening-Questionnaire-Child-Care-Day-Camp-School.pdf>

Thank you for your continued efforts to help keep our school community safe and healthy.

Working Together to Ensure Student Success

In order to ensure the best possible education for your child, it is necessary for them to attend school regularly and to be on time for class. A student's academic progress depends on regular class attendance – whether they are part of In Person or Virtual Learning. Students are expected to fully participate in learning opportunities. Research indicates that attendance patterns and attitudes



are developed at an early age, so establishing and supporting these expectations at home is very important.

You can help ensure your child's success by:

- being involved in your child's education;
- knowing the school's schedule and ensuring that your child comes to school unless they are sick;
- communicating regularly with classroom teachers (use your child's agenda to communicate with the teacher) or send notes;
- ensuring that your child gets a good night's sleep so that they have the energy they need for the next day.

Let's work together to ensure student success!

Keeping Students Safe – Street Safety

Drivers are reminded to do their part to keep children safe.

Drivers should follow these tips:

- Stop and never pass a school bus when its red lights are flashing.
- Leave space around school buses and avoid blocking school bus loading zones (*our school's bus loading zone is located on Highbrook Drive in front of the Kindergarten playground area*) so children can enter and exit safely.
- Be prepared to stop for a school bus at any time, not just during school hours.
- Always obey the rules of the road and watch for children, especially in school zones.
- Stop for pedestrians at crosswalks and school crossings.

Parents can also help keep their children safe by reminding them to be aware of their surroundings when they are around school zones which are quite busy during entry and dismissal times.

Terry Fox

A great big thank you to all of our students who participated in our annual Terry Fox Run this year!



Much appreciation to Ms. Voltsinis, Ms. Anagnostopoulos, Mr. Mendoza, Ms. Sathiyathan and Mr. Kampouris for coordinating this event for our school. Thank you to our families who made donations to support cancer research and helped us reach our goal of raising \$500. We not only met this goal as a school, we doubled that amount and our school raised \$1009.35! There is a lot of excitement about us reaching our goal amount as this means that Mrs. Lane, Mr. Dimakas and Mrs. Perera will get a pie in the face to celebrate the amount that our students raised!

Hallowe'en

Hallowe'en provides an opportunity for parents and children to spend time together creating costumes, carving pumpkins, and planning fun activities.



Hallowe'en provides opportunities for celebrations, creative activities, art programs and impromptu history lessons.

At school students will be engaging in a variety of activities. On Monday, October 31st, students are welcome to dress up in a costume if they would like to wear one, or they can wear orange or black.

Safety Tips:

Hallowe'en is also a time for students, families, and schools to take extra care to ensure safety and security.

TRICK OR TREAT SAFETY
If parents are concerned about trick or treating, here are some basic safety rules to follow:

- Children should NEVER eat any treats until parents have had a chance to go through them and inspect them. Parents should look for tampering of packages and discard any they believe to be unsafe or unknown.
- Have your child carry a flashlight.
- NEVER go into a stranger's house.
- NEVER trick or treat with people you do not know.
- Trick or treat only at homes you know.
- Children should always stay in groups if no parent is present.
- Younger children should ALWAYS be accompanied by an older person.
- Accompany your child when trick or treating.
- If you can not accompany your child then know the route your child will take.
- Flame resistant (retardant) costumes are in order. Keep costumes short and remind children to stay away from pumpkins with candles in them.
- Remind children to stay away from pets they do not know.
- Remind children of road safety rules. Cross only at corners. Do not criss-cross across the road. Go up one side of the road and down the other side. Never cross between parked cars. Walk facing on-coming traffic if there is no sidewalk
- If adults are driving their children, drive slowly, with lights on and be cautious when pulling to the side of the road.
- Children should wear their own shoes when trick or treating. Wearing costume shoes/boots can be dangerous and uncomfortable.
- Remind children that not everyone celebrates Hallowe'en, and to avoid any homes that have no lights on. Also remind children not to run through neighbours' yards or gardens.
- With older children, be sure to know what other events (such as parties) they plan on attending.
- Set time limits when children should return home.

Islamic Heritage Month – October 2022

The Toronto District School Board proudly recognizes Islamic Heritage Month during the month of October. This recognition follows the motion passed by the Board of Trustees on June 22, 2016.

Our main theme for the month is **Reflect. Celebrate. Learn.**

Islamic Heritage Month has been recognized across Canada in different ways since October 2007. In November 2016, the Province of Ontario established October as Islamic History Month through the *Islamic Heritage Month Act*, and further

stated that “proclaiming a month to be Islamic Heritage Month in Ontario will provide all Ontarians, both today and in future generations, with an opportunity to reflect, celebrate, and learn about the rich and longstanding Islamic history in the province and the diverse roles and contributions of Muslim people in communities across Ontario. This new understanding will in turn help combat anti-Islamic sentiment.”

The Islamic Heritage Month poster will be shared with all schools in TDSB and highlights some of the important contributions that Muslims have made to the world throughout history. The poster includes an image of an Astrolabe, which was used to tell time, calculate the sunset and sunrise, and helped individuals to navigate on land and sea.

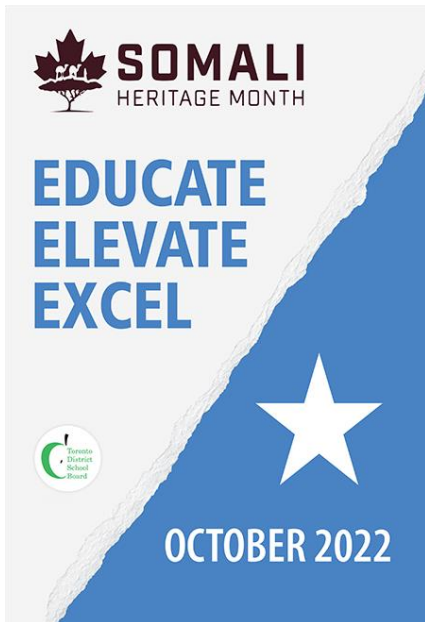
Please follow us on Twitter: [@tdsb_ihm](https://twitter.com/tdsb_ihm)

October is Somali Heritage Month at the TDSB

The Toronto District School Board proudly recognizes Somali Heritage Month in October. The TDSB has been marking Somali Heritage Month since June 2016, and we continue to expand on the selected theme: **Educate. Elevate. Excel.**



In October 2020, the Government of Ontario proclaimed Somali Heritage Week Act, 2020. "By proclaiming the week of June 25 through July 1 as



Somali Heritage Week, the Province of Ontario recognizes the economic, political, social and cultural achievements and contributions of Somali Canadians in all aspects of Ontario society. Like many refugees

and immigrants who have made Ontario their home, Somali Canadians are proud to be part of diverse communities across the province."

All schools and Board offices will receive the Somali Heritage Month poster and presenters will address students and staff throughout the month on topics related to Somali heritage.

Please follow us on Twitter at [SomaliHM@TDSB](https://twitter.com/SomaliHM@TDSB) for daily content.

Grade 8 to 9 Transition Planning

Grade 8 is an exciting school year for our students and their families! The school has been emailing parents various pieces of information regarding Transition Meetings and School Open Houses to support our families as they work with us to navigate their child's transition preparation for moving into high school. As well, our Grade 8 teachers have been posting this information in your child's Google Classroom in order to provide easy access to the resources and information that is being shared.

On **Thursday, October 27th** our Grade 8 families have been invited to a *Learning Network 13 - Grade 8 to 9*

Transition Information Evening. A reminder email about this event, along with the link will be sent to our families closer to this date.

Please see the following link for information on upcoming Open Houses and Information Nights for high schools: <https://www.tdsb.on.ca/High-School/Going-to-High-School/Open-Houses-and-Information-Nights>

Early French Immersion (Junior Kindergarten Entry) Application Deadline

For families interested in the Toronto District School Board's system-wide French Immersion Program, the TDSB offers an online process to apply for Early French Immersion (begins in Junior Kindergarten). An offer of placement in the program (not a specific school) is guaranteed to all on-time applicants. Families with an older sibling currently in an Early French Immersion program are still required to complete an online application for the new student. The timeline to apply to the program for September 2023 is between October 31 and November 25, 2022.

For more information, please visit: [Early French Immersion](#), [EFI Flyer Translations](#), [Virtual & In-Person Information Sessions](#) or the [Application Process](#).



Student Valuables/ Cell Phones

Parents can always contact their child through the main office if there is an emergency, and therefore students do not need to bring cell phones to school for calling home. Students are encouraged not to bring valuables such as cell phones, electronic devices, jewelry, as well as large quantities of money.

We realize that in some cases students may have cell phones for safety purposes (e.g, for walking home). While on school property; cell phones are to be turned off and placed out of view during

the regular school day, on excursions and at extra-curricular and school related activities. Students are responsible for storing their cell phone in a secure location. It is important to understand that **students who bring cell phones and other valuables to school are doing so at their own risk**. The school is not responsible for the replacement of such items that may be damaged, stolen or lost.

Snack Program

Thank you to Mrs. Patel, our Snack Program Coordinator, who will be providing our students from Kindergarten to Grade 8 with a daily healthy morning snack. Our Snack Program has begun! Snack Program is available for any family that wishes to participate in it, you just need to complete the Snack Program form for your child to receive snack.

If you choose to send your own snack for your child, remember that **many students and staff members have life-threatening allergies to certain foods, in particular nuts and nut products**. Please try to send a healthy snack for your child, such as fruits and vegetables.



**PLEASE
DO NOT SEND NUTS OR
NUT PRODUCTS TO SCHOOL!**

Reminder: If your child has health problems of any kind, please inform your child's teacher or office staff immediately so that the necessary health protection steps may be taken, and to ensure everyone's co-operation for a safe learning environment.

Lunch Supervision

Lunch time is a very busy time at our school! If parents are at home during the lunch hour we encourage that students go home for lunch for a

break, **students are to return to school right before the entry bell rings which is at 12:30 p.m.**

Going home at lunch time is an opportunity for students to take a break from the hustle and bustle of the school day and to have a chance to relax with their family while enjoying their lunch.

Steps to Problem Solving

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 need to be supported and worked through with our students and children on an ongoing basis at home. All of us have an important role to play in helping our students (your children) to make good decisions for both themselves and others, and to learn from their mistakes and make better choices the next time. This is an essential part of progressive discipline as well.

School Council

Our School Council nomination forms were emailed to parents in preparation for the 2022-2023 School Council Election.

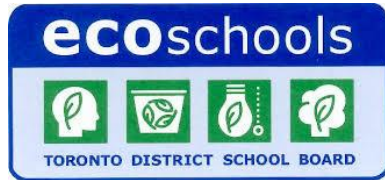


Parents are welcome to attend School Council meetings as often as you can. Meetings take place monthly, usually on the 1st Tuesday of each month. This school year most meetings will continue to

take place virtually, but there will be a few in person meetings as well. Please look for dates and times on the school calendar and on our school's Google Calendar located on the landing page of our school website. Our first School Council meeting took place on Tuesday, October 18th at 5:30 p.m. Our next School Council meeting will be on Tuesday, November 8th. A link will be emailed to parents prior to each meeting date.

Eco Schools

Donwood Park is certified as a **Gold Eco School**. Our school, from



Kindergarten-Grade 8, continues to work on initiatives such as recycling of materials in the classrooms, turning our classroom lights off and technology when it is not in use and following our Boomerang/Litterless Lunch Program goals. Parents can support our Eco initiatives by teaching your children through showing Eco awareness in your homes and supporting our Boomerang Lunch Program.

Suggestions to Parents to Support Boomerang Lunch:

- Encourage your child to eat leftovers as a snack after school if they are still safe to eat.
- Pack sandwiches, fruits and vegetables in reusable plastic containers.
- Help your child pack their own healthy foods that they like.
- Only pack as much food as you know your child will eat.
- Label all containers so that lost items can be returned home.
- Avoid packing drinks that cannot be resealed.

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World Teachers' Day	October 5
School Picture Day	October 6
Curriculum Night	October 6
P.A. Day	October 7
Thanksgiving	October 10
Scholastic Book Fair	October 24-28
Grade 8 Learning Network	
Transition Meeting	October 27
Photo Re-takes (a.m.)	November 1
Interview Request Forms Sent Home	November 1
School Council Meeting	November 8
Interview Confirmation	
Forms Sent Home	November 10
Remembrance Day	November 11
Report Cards Sent Home	November 16
Parent-Teacher Interviews	November 17 (evening)
P. A. Day	November 18
Parent Teacher Interviews	November 18 (morning)
P.A. Day	December 2
Winter Holidays	December 24-January 8

Principal	Andrea Lane
Vice Principal	Thanasi Dimakas
Vice Principal	Brandi Perera
Superintendent	Jacqueline Spence
Trustee	Aleem Punja
Office Administrator	Sophie Guarnaschelli
Secretary	Michelle Andersen
	Sinead Meechan
Head Caretaker	Peter Panourgias



Visit our school website at:
www.donwoodpark.ca

Follow us on Twitter at **@TDSB_Donwood**

