

**Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 17 (January 12<sup>th</sup>, 2024)**

Dear Vanier Family,

Welcome back and Happy New Year!

I hope you and your loved ones had a wonderful and restful holiday! While we've had a very busy start to the school year, the month of January will be even more so as we wrap up semester one. We are confident, however, that "there are far better things ahead than we leave behind" (C.S. Lewis). And so, we welcome this new year with arms wide open as we continue to strive for greater academic success and wellbeing for our students and more collaboration and sharing with each other and the wider school community. I wish you all the very best in 2024!



The next few weeks are pivotal in the school calendar, with upcoming EQAO assessments and course culminating tasks (exams and final performances). Details about these are shared below under our **Achievement** section. Please review these carefully.

**Karen Johnson**

Principal, Georges Vanier SS

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<https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/georgesvanier>

## Achievement

**EQAO Math Exam for Grade 9 Students.** On January 18 and January 19, our students in the Grade 9 mathematics course (MTH1W) this semester will take part in the online Grade 9 Assessment of Mathematics administered by the Education Quality and Accountability Office (EQAO). This assessment is administered province-wide and has been developed by Ontario teachers and assessment experts. It is designed to allow students to demonstrate their skills and knowledge

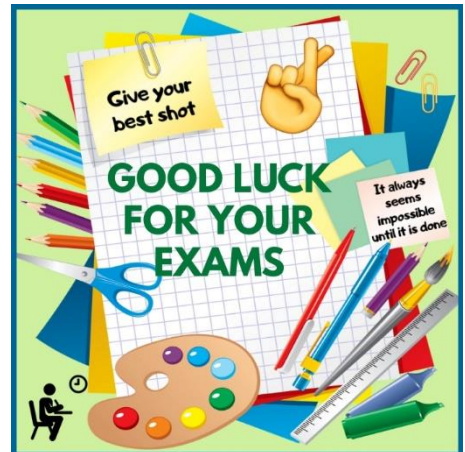


relating to mathematics as described in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grade 9: Mathematics (2021)*. For more information about EQAO and to view a sample test, visit EQAO's website, [www.eqao.com](http://www.eqao.com).

Good luck to all our students. Students taking Grade 9 Math in Semester 2 will write their EQAO exam in June 2024.

**Semester 1 Final Exams.** As part of their summative (final) evaluations, some of our Semester 1 courses will have exams. **Exams Dates: January 24<sup>th</sup> – January 30<sup>th</sup>, 2024.** An exam schedule and instructions can be found [here](#).

Please note there are no exemptions for culminating tasks and exams. As such, all students must participate in these activities to earn their credit. If a student is not able to write an exam during the allotted time, a medical note is required, and the student will write the exam on another day. You may find more information about our policy ([GVSS Assessment & Evaluation Policy 2023](#)) around examinations and culminating tasks in the Georges Vanier [Student Handbook](#)



### Preparing for Exams and Culminating Assignments –

January is the time of year when secondary students are working on course culminating assignments and preparing for Semester 1 exams. For some tips and resources about exams, culminating tasks, mental health/well-being and access to free 24/7 online tutoring support, check out the [Exam and Course Culminating Fact Sheet](#).



**Online Tutoring for TDSB Students** - Online, on demand tutoring is available 24/7 for students. Secondary students can access tutoring for all courses and grades through [Paper](#). View the [Paper Poster](#) for more information or contact Paper.

## Virtual Learning

The TDSB will continue to offer students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 12 the option for virtual learning in the 2024 - 2025 school year. Elementary Virtual Learning classes will continue to be hosted at local schools. Secondary students will attend Virtual Secondary School.

Regular programs and Intensive Support Programs (ISPs) depending on viable programming and where there is available space, will be offered in elementary and secondary Virtual Learning. French Immersion, Extended French, LEAP, Alternative Schools, and Student Interest Programs continue to be available **in-person only**.

For more information, please refer to the [2024 - 25 Virtual Learning, Internal Q & A](#). If you have any questions, please contact Linda Edwards, Centrally Assigned Principal, Virtual Learning & Re-Engagement.

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## General Information & News

- Student Activity Fee:** This year's student activity fee (SAF) will be \$35 per student OR \$60.00 if you have two children in our school. This SAF fee pays for a Yearbook, student ID card, and Student Council activities. **By the end of this month, we will have to submit to our publishers the number of yearbooks to produce for our school. As such, parents are encouraged to use School Cash Online to pay their child's student activity fee, so they won't miss out on the yearbook, as soon as possible.** If needed, financial assistance is available to offset the activity fee. You may contact the principal to provide/obtain more information. **REMINDER!!**



You need a  
**yearbook!**  
(just sayin'...)

- Health and Safety Measures.** To help reduce the risk of illness from Covid-19 and other viruses, students are encouraged to stay home when sick, complete the school screening (self-assessment) before coming to school, clean their hands often and stay up to date on their vaccinations. While mask-wearing is not mandated, it is still recommended that these are worn when indoors.





## Equity

**Tamil Heritage Month.** Tamil Heritage Month is proudly recognized during the month of January at the TDSB since January 2016. It has also been marked across the province of Ontario since March 2014 with the implementation of the Tamil Heritage Month Act, 2014 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/statute/14t04>). Further, Tamil Heritage Month is formally recognized nationally since January 2016 by the passing of a motion which reads, that, in the opinion of the House, the government should recognize the contributions that Tamil-Canadians have made to Canadian society, the richness of the Tamil language and culture, and the importance of educating and reflecting upon Tamil heritage for future generations by declaring January, every year, Tamil Heritage Month.



Toronto has the largest Tamil population outside of the South Asian subcontinent with thousands of TDSB students and staff members identified as Tamil. The importance of building awareness, creating a strong self-identity, and understanding one's own roots and rights are important objectives of the activities being planned for this month.

This year, the theme for Tamil Heritage Month is ***Our Memories, Our Truths, Our Paths Forward: A Mosaic of Tamil Identity.*** Memories play an integral role in how we shape our stories and identities. They are what we tell ourselves about who we are, and they form the basis for how people know us as well as how we perceive and know the world around us. Memories also shape our truths, and it is within our memories and truths that we set goals for ourselves and move forward, individually, and collectively as a group of people.

**TDSB Virtual Community Fair: Let's Talk about Camp and Funding for Child/Youth with Special/Complex Needs.** Camping Season Will Be Here Soon!! Come Join Us as We Learn from Our Community Partners About Camp and Funding Options for Your Child or Youth With Special/Complex Needs. Get Firsthand Information from Agency Representatives about March Break Camps, Summer Camps, Respite and Funding Options. Start Your Planning Early! ([Flyer](#))

**Speakers:** Geneva Centre for Autism, Community Living Toronto, Surrey Place, Toronto Parks & Recreation, Variety Village and Ontario Camp Association.

**Date:** Monday, January 15th, 2024

**Time:** 9:30 am to 12:00 noon

(Will be repeated on Monday, January 22nd, 2024, from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm)  
Join on your computer, mobile app or device

[Click here to join the meeting](#)

**Meeting ID:** 255 846 447 429

**Passcode:** 3BWFVF

[Download Teams](#) | [Join on the web](#)

For more information send email to [virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:virtualfairinfo@tdsb.on.ca) or call Larena Case at 416-570-3314 or Maria Antonia Aymerich at 416-524-1930 or Vanessa Wong at 647-229-0730.



## Health and Well-Being

**2023-2024 Winter Well-Being Guide**. The Winter Well-Being Guide (click on the live link to access it) is filled with activities, games, wellness tips, resources and community agencies to support wellness for all students, parents/guardians/caregivers, and school communities.



The Guide provides accessible resources and is available in the top 20 TDSB spoken languages. Visit this site to access the guide in other languages:

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Elementary-School/Supporting-You/Mental-Health-and-Well-Being-Professional-Support-Staff-PSS/Well-Being-Guide>

### **\*NEW\* Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Helpline 9-8-8...NEW!!!**

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) through the Canadian Radio and Television Corporation (CRTC) has announced on November 30th, 2023, a national three-digit Mental Health and Suicide Prevention hotline number, 988, will be in effect.

CMH's new role in leading the development of 988 service delivery in Canada builds on their experience delivering Talk Suicide Canada, previously known as the Canada Suicide Prevention Service. The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (CAMH) has been selected as the organization to lead the coordination of service delivery for the national three-digit number.

In the face of increased demand for crisis services, 9-8-8 provides:

- A number that's easy to remember in a crisis.
- Support in English and in French, by phone and text.
- Quick access to support from trained responders, available 24/7/365.
- High quality, evidence-based, equitable suicide prevention and crisis support for everyone in Canada.



For more information about 9-8-8: Suicide Crisis Helpline, visit <https://988.ca>.

More information is also available at [9-8-8 | CAMH](#) and [9-8-8 number for mental health and suicide prevention | CRTC](#)

## **Kids' Helplines:**

**Kids Help Phone Line** is a 24 hour/7 days per week crisis line that youth can contact for support:  
Online Chat: [www.kidshelpphone.ca](http://www.kidshelpphone.ca) Phone: 1-800-668-6868 Text: 686868

**Black Youth Help Line** – available 9 AM – 10 PM [www.blackyouth.ca](http://www.blackyouth.ca) 416-285-9944

**LGBT Youth Line** – Sunday – Friday 4 PM – 9:30 PM – PEER SUPPORT\*

Live chat: [www.youthline.ca](http://www.youthline.ca) Text: 647-694-4275 Call: 1-800-268-9688

**Naseeha - Muslim Mental Health Help Phone** – 1-866-Naseeha (627-3342)

Call: 1-866-627-3342 (7 days/week 12-9 PM) Text: 1-866-627-3342 (Mon-Fri 12-9 PM)

**Hope for Wellness Help Chat** – offers immediate mental health counselling and crisis intervention to all Indigenous peoples across Canada

Live chat: [www.hopeforwellness.ca](http://www.hopeforwellness.ca) Call: 1-855-242-3310 (24/7)

## **Other Resources:**

**Help Ahead** is the centralized resource and intake phone line for multiple trusted community-based mental health organizations in Toronto. Help Ahead has up-to-date information about the available programs and services and can find local supports to address the needs of your child and family.  
<https://www.helpahead.ca/> 1-866-585-6486

**What's Up Walk-In Clinic** provides free mental health counselling for children, youth, young adults and their families, and family with infants. <https://www.whatsupwalkin.ca/resources/>

**One Stop Talk** is a free, confidential service that lets children and youth aged 0-17 years call or connect online from anywhere in Ontario to get brief mental health services. Parents seeking services are encouraged to visit *One Stop Talk* with their child to ensure access to a session.  
<https://onestoptalk.ca/> 1-855-416-8255

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## **Upcoming Dates & Events**

January 15:	OUAC Application Deadline
January 17:	Late Start Day; Classes start @ 9:55 am
January 18 – 19:	Grade 9 EQAO Exam Days
January 18,19, 22, 23:	Moratorium on HW/Tests/Evaluations outside of Culminating Tasks
January 24 – 30:	Exam Days
January 24:	Preparing for myBlueprint – Online @ 6:00pm
January 31:	Exam/Marks Review Day – All students in class (Special Schedule)
February 1:	PA Day
February 2:	Semester 2 begins!

## Parent Concern Protocol

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Step One

### Classroom Teacher

If you have any questions or concerns, the first person to go to is your classroom teacher. The classroom teacher can help with:

- Any questions about the classroom
- Classroom rules and consequences
- Homework and assignments

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Step Two

### School Principal

If you would like more information or you have questions that are beyond the classroom, the school principal can help.

- Concerns about an individual school
- Student registration
- Student schedules
- Student suspensions
- Report card concerns
- Classroom concerns
- Code of Conduct
- Safety and security
- Budget and fundraising
- School Council

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Step Three

### School Superintendents

Superintendents are responsible for a Network of Schools. They support school staff and can be contacted if you have questions that have not been answered or for help with:

- Alternate attendance request
- Suspension appeals

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Step Four

### Trustees

Trustees are your elected community officials. They are available to help you with the following areas of the TDSB:

- Concerns about your community
- Ideas and suggestions for the Board
- Items on Board Agenda
- Board policies under review
- Board budget
- Collective bargaining

#### Board Office

You can contact the Board Office directly for any questions or concerns related to:

- Continuing Education
- ESL
- Night and summer school
- Board documents
- Adult education

Phone: 416-397-3000 • Email: [GeneralInquiries@TDSB.on.ca](mailto:GeneralInquiries@TDSB.on.ca)

## School Information

School Phone #: (416) 395 – 3250

School's Twitter: @GeorgesVanierSS

School's Website:

<https://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/georgesvanier>

### Our Student Support Team:

#### Guidance:

Jennifer Hayward (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

Supporting Students with surnames N - Z

[jennifer.hayward@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:jennifer.hayward@tdsb.on.ca)

Margarita Leventis

Supporting Students with Surnames G - M

[margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca)

Loraine Chichester

Supporting Students with Surnames A - F

[loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca)

#### Special Education:

Steven Maurer (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

[steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca)

#### Student Success:

Paula Burgess (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

[paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca)

**Superintendent:** Kurt McIntosh (LC2|LN11)

416-395-8808 • [Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca)

**Trustee:** James Li • Ward 13

416-395-8787 • [James.Li@tdsb.on.ca](mailto:James.Li@tdsb.on.ca)