

Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 22 (February 16th, 2024)

Dear Vanier Family,

This week was a short one for students as today, February 16th, was a professional activity day. As usual, it was a packed one - filled with a plethora of activities for students. For example, our Robotics Club held a bake sale during the week to help raise funds for their upcoming debut in the **FIRST** Robotics Competition. The team and our school welcome all financial donations, so parents/caregivers, if you can support our Robotics Team as they prepare to enter their first competition, please email me. On Wednesday, February 14th, Valentine's Day, our Student Advisory Council (SAC) hosted a lunch hour karaoke, where students got to belt out their favourite love song to a packed cafetorium. It is always good to see students enjoying themselves.



Another group of students who had a blast this past week were those in our PEEL program (students with developmental disabilities). They were busy practicing for their **PEEL's Got Talent Night**, which will be held on March 7th. More information will be shared about this night a little closer to the date.

Next Week promises to be even more fun! On Monday (Feb. 19), students will again be away from school as it's Family Day! I wish you and your family a restful and enjoyable day! Commencing on Tuesday, Feb. 20, will be Vanier's Sem 2, Spirit Week. Our SAC team has planned a week of fun activities for staff and students, and we look forward to huge participation by all (see next page for the planned activities). So, bring on your Vanier cheer and demonstrate your Vanier Spirit.



Photo Re-take day is also happening next week! On **Thursday, February 22**, graduating students who still need to book their grad photo, and those new-to-Vanier, as well as students who still do not have a current Vanier ID card (please note that a current student ID is required for all school events, including exams), will have a final opportunity to take their photos. More information is shared below.

Last, but not least, I would like to forecast a very important upcoming event. This will be our Parent Council meeting on February 28 at 6:30 pm in the school's library (Learning Hub). On this night, we'll be hosting a presentation on Human trafficking. We invite all parents/caregivers to come out to this session so they can learn how to keep our children safe from human trafficking. More information is shared below.




Have a fantastic weekend Vanier!

Karen Johnson

Principal, Georges Vanier SS
416-395-3250 Ext. 20010

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

SPIRIT WEEK ACTIVITIES

TUESDAY FEB 20	WEDNESDAY FEB 21	THURSDAY FEB 22	FRIDAY FEB 23
<p>Theme: Twin Tuesday</p> <p>Pair up with a friend or teacher and wear the same outfit!</p> <p>Twin Day</p>  <p>Event: Fashion Show @ lunch in caf</p> <p>Walk the "runway" with your "twin" for a chance to win a prize!</p>	<p>Theme: Vanier Day</p> <p>Wear Vanier gear and/ or colours (maroon/gold)</p>  <p>GEORGES VANIER</p> <p>Event: Teacher V. Student Musical Chairs @ lunch in caf</p> <p>Play for a chance to win a prize and perhaps beat some of Vanier's teachers at this game!</p>	<p>Theme: Throwback Thursday</p> <p>Dress in an outfit from the 90s and/or 2000s!</p>  <p>Event: Tik Tok Dance Off @ lunch in caf</p> <p>Participate in dance challenges inspired by Tik Tok for a chance to win a prize!</p> <p>Signup Form: https://forms.gle/iNpD6icfuT37kqF28</p>	<p>Theme: Adam Sandler Day</p> <p>Show up in your best Adam Sandler copycat outfit!</p>   <p>Event: Partner Obstacle Course @ lunch in caf</p> <p>Grab a friend and participate in a mini obstacle course challenge for a chance to win a prize!</p>

News from our Trustees' Office

Please click on the hyperlink below to access the Ward 13 Trustee's (James Li) Update for February 2024.
[Ward 13 – Trustee February 2024 Newsletter](#)

Vanier School Advisory Council (VSAC)...SPECIAL SESSION!!

<p>Nalini Devineni (Co-Chair) Stephanie Hennaoui (Co-Chair) Danielle Ferguson-Shivrattan (Secretary) Susanna Scocchia (Teacher Rep) Peju Omirinde (Student Rep)</p>	<p>Cordelia Ramses Saber Ullah Maryam Marzban Ivy C.</p>
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Our Co-chairs have created a WhatsApp group for Vanier parents. If you would like to be a part of this WhatsApp group, so you can discuss parent concerns, please click on the following link: <https://chat.whatsapp.com/DbrLzm6EIJV1a03NVoNCAQ>

Upcoming Council Meeting Dates: February 28, 2024* | April 3, 2024 | May 1, 2024|@ 6:30 pm

Please note that our February Council meeting will be a very important one, as we will have a special **Parents & Prevention: Human Trafficking workshop** given by Victim Services Toronto. This workshop will focus on empowering parents and caregivers with the tools they need to keep youth in their care, safe. Caregivers will learn about:

- What human trafficking is
- Boarder context in which human trafficking takes place
- Where Youth are recruited from
- Red Flags to look out for
- How to support Youth
- Hear firsthand experience from the parent of a survivor
- How to get involved and spread awareness



COURSE SELECTION TIME - Important News from our Guidance Office

February is myBlueprint (MBP) course selection month! Guidance will be working with all students to help support their understanding of course selection, choose courses for next year, and assist with pathways planning. All students in TDSB use [myBlueprint](#) to choose courses.

Starting next **Monday February 12th**, students will be able to submit their course selections. Parents/caregivers are strongly encouraged to review their child’s course choices before they are submitted. Once courses are submitted, changes cannot be made. If students do need to make a change to their course selection, they will need to speak to their Guidance counsellor.

Guidance counsellors will be available in a computer lab at lunchtime from February 20th – 26th to assist students. For information on all the courses offered at Vanier, please click on the link below. [Vanier Course Charts February 2024](#)

DUE DATE for ALL MBP Course selections: Monday February 26th, 2024!!

Student Activity Fee - REMINDER!!

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.



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

Achievement

Peer-Tutoring

Peer tutoring is available for grades 9-11 students who want help with their Math, English, and Science courses. Simply **complete THIS FORM to request a tutor.** Students can sign up at any point in the semester!

After-School Literacy/Math Tutoring

IT'S BACK! The program will start the week of Feb 26 and end, the week of June 3.

This is NOT a drop-in session! Students will need to register to attend. They may do so by coming to the main office. Classes will run from 3:30 to 4:40pm. Below are the teachers who will be providing the tutoring, along with their day and location.

Mr. Husain (Tues/Thurs) – LITERACY Room 203

Ms. Gersternova (Mon/Wed) – LITERACY Room 211

Mr. Hui (Mon/Thur) – MATH Room 320

PHOTO DAY for STUDENTS. Edge Imaging Photography will be back in the building on **THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 22, 2024** (morning ONLY) to take photos for Vanier students who did not get photos or an ID card in the Fall. Students will be called down in the morning. Be sure to bring your best smile!

Grade 12 students who still need to sit for a Graduation Photo Session may also book a time online for this same day. The sitting fee is \$40. Grade 12s are to book their appointment through www.bookmygrad.ca, code **GVR**.



Equity

African-Heritage Month at the TDSB - February 2023. During the month of February, the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) proudly recognizes African Heritage (Black History) Month. African Heritage (Black History) Month is recognized across Canada, thanks to The Honourable MP Jean Augustine, who introduced the motion in the House of Commons in December 1995; it officially took effect in February in 1996.

The [Black History Month Act](#) was also passed in Ontario in 2016 and has been formally recognized since. African Heritage (Black History) Month is an occasion to commemorate present and past individuals who helped shape the path of our future student leaders, while also celebrating the many achievements and contributions of numerous individuals with this heritage! Their voices and actions impact our society, and work to continuously improve the world we live in.

This year's chosen theme is: **Our Black Is...Our Black Is Resilient, Community, Beautiful, Unity, Joy, Self-Determination, Excellence, Empowering, Purpose, Brilliance, Engaging, Creative, Belonging, Tenacious, Powerful, Faith, Audacious, Powerful, Me...**

In recognition of February 2024 African Heritage/Black History Month, the TDSB's **Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement** has collaborated with a variety of community partners, leaders, and TDSB departments to celebrate the wonderful and undeniable achievements of Black people, their histories, and their cultures. As TDSB celebrates African Heritage/Black History Month with the theme Our Black Is...We invite you to join us for the many opportunities planned for this month. Click [here](#) for a flyer of some of the events scheduled.

Here at Vanier, our BCU Club (Black Collective Union) is busy working on a dramatic performance, which they will be presenting to our entire school community as part of our local African Heritage Month celebrations. Stay tuned for further information about this.



Webinar Wednesdays

The Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement is hosting its second session of the 2023 - 2024 Webinar Wednesdays series. The aim of this **virtual series** is to provide space for Black parents and caregivers, and families raising Black children to support their children's success, academic achievement, and overall well-being as they transition from high school. Through collaborations with various post-secondary institutions, the Webinar Wednesdays series shares information and resources on

various topics, including, but not limited to, graduation and post-secondary pathways. This session, we focus on Pathways to Skilled Trades. Join us as we learn more about the various pathways and apprenticeship programs.

Date: Wednesday, March 6, 2024 | Time: 6:30 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.

Location: Virtual | Registration link: bit.ly/42zc7sY

For more information contact, jeffrey.caton@tdsb.on.ca, Centrally Assigned Principal, or lindsey.marshall@tdsb.on.ca, Program Co-ordinator, Centre of Excellence for Black Student Achievement.

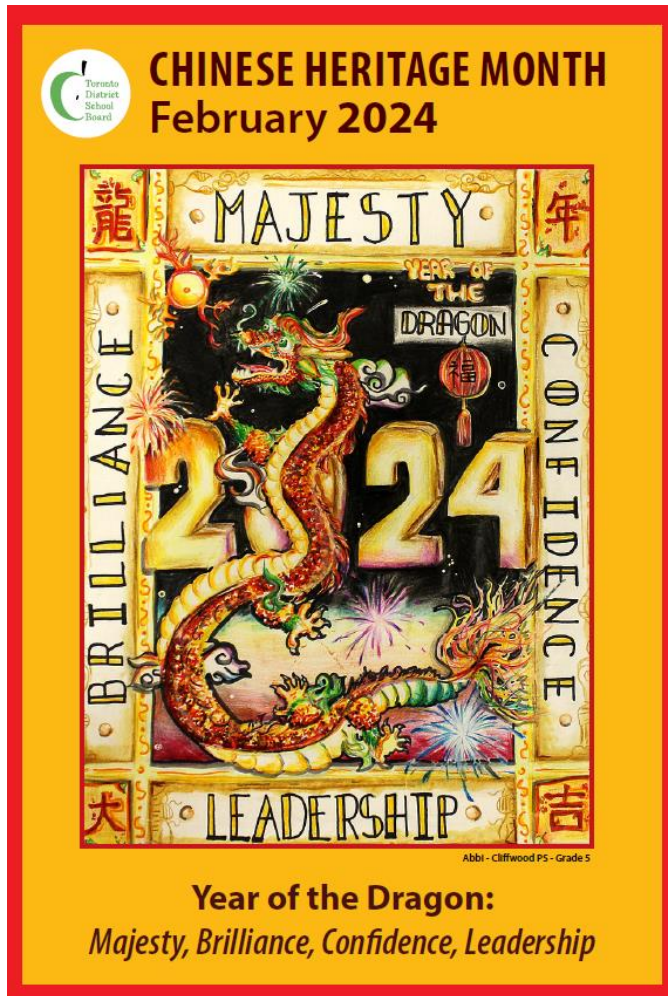
Chinese Heritage Month at the TDSB - February 2024. TDSB Chinese Heritage Month is proudly recognized in February each year. During this month, several learning resources and educational opportunities will be provided to our students and staff to further enhance their knowledge of the Chinese heritage. This year we celebrate the **Year of the Dragon: Majesty, Brilliance, Confidence, Leadership.**

This February we will also celebrate the Lunar New Year. Lunar New Year, also known as the Spring Festival, is one of the most important celebrations for Chinese communities around the world. Lunar New Year is celebrated annually, and its dates are based on the lunar calendar. For 2024, it starts Saturday, **February 10 and ends Saturday, February 24.** The festivities include family gatherings, decorations, and of course a feast!

TDSB celebrations. To mark Chinese Heritage Month, all TDSB students were invited to participate in the CHM's popular annual poster contest. Below are the links to the nine winning entries.

- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 01](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 02](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 03](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 04](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 05](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 06](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 07](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 08](#)
- [Chinese Heritage Month Posters 09](#)

Health and Well-Being



The TDSB Special Education & Inclusion Team will be hosting a **virtual** session for parents/caregivers of students with special needs to learn about the following:

- *Transitions for Students with an IEP*
- *Elementary to Secondary Transitions*
- *Post-Secondary Transitions*
- *School/Home Partnerships*
- *Resources*

Information on how to sign up can be found by clicking on the following links:

Morning Session – March 5th from 10:00 am – 11:00 am

[FLYER Parent Session March 5th AM Session.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Evening Session – March 6th from 6:30 pm – 7: 30 pm

[FLYER Parent Session March 6th PM Session.pptx - Google Slides](#)

Health and Well-Being (con't)

Protecting Yourself Against Scams...**NEW!!!**

The rise of artificial intelligence (AI) technologies has led to a rapid increase in scamming activities using AI, which almost perfectly reproduces a person's voice. An "impersonation scam" occurs when criminals make use of AI created voices to read pre-prepared scripts in order to trick people into giving the scammers money. These scenarios can include:

- A young individual was arrested and needs cash to make bail.
- A family member has been kidnapped and they require a ransom for release.
- A friend, claiming to be stranded, urgently needs money for travel expenses.

Scammers will often use pressure tactics like the emergency situations listed above to make you feel like you have no choice but to give them money. These calls are, by design, very stressful, and AI makes it practically impossible to tell reality from fiction. Therefore, it is very important to follow the tips below to better react to and prevent fraud:

- Contact the friend or family member, or someone who can confirm their condition, to ascertain whether or not the original call was genuine.
- Be cautious about what you post online, as scammers will gather voice clips from social media and through other means to create the clone.
- Consider setting a code word for phone calls with close ones as authentication.

Please review the following resources which will deepen your understanding and better protect yourself and the people around you from voice cloning scams.

- [Police believe AI voice cloning used to scam seniors](#) (Video)
- [Ontario man out \\$8K in scam that uses AI to mimic voices of friends and family](#) (Article)

As times change, so too do fraudsters. It is important to keep yourself safe, so please remember these cyber tips and stay vigilant about new and dangerous scams.

Lets Connect About Mental Health and Well Being Webinar Series

The TDSB Professional Support Services will be running a "*Lets Connect About Mental Health and Well Being Webinar Series: Parent Voices-Creating fun opportunities to connect and boost positive mental health, joy, and happiness.* ([flyer](#)).

Date & Time: First session will be on **February 22, 2024, from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm**

Audience: Students, families, parents, guardians, caregivers, and staff are all welcome!

Members from our Mental Health and Well-being Parent Partnership Committee will add their voices on the importance of exploring fun activities for positive mental health and wellness. In addition, there will be breakout rooms, which will be co-led by Professional Support Staff and community partners, sharing different ways we can enhance overall mental health and wellness.

[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 Phone: 1-800-668-6868 Text: 686868

Black Youth Help Line – available 9 AM – 10 PM www.blackyouth.ca 416-285-9944

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

Live chat: 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 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

Upcoming Dates & Events

Feb. 19	Family Day
Feb. 20-23	SAC Spirit Week
Feb. 21	Late Start – Classes Start at 9:55 am
Feb. 22	Photo Day (Student ID & Grad Photo)
Feb. 26	Literacy/Numeracy Tutoring Starts (Afterschool)
Feb. 28	Late Start – Classes Start at 9:55 am
Feb. 28	School Council Meeting 6:30 - 8:00pm
Feb. 29	2 nd Annual Black Excellence Career Panel Pd. 2
Mar. 1	Black History Month Assembly
Mar. 11-15	March Break

Parent Concern Protocol

1

Classroom Teacher

Step One

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

2

School Principal

Step Two

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

3

School Superintendents

Step Three

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

4

Trustees

Step Four

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

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

Margarita Leventis

Supporting Students with Surnames G - M

margarite.leventis@tdsb.on.ca

Lorraine Chichester

Supporting Students with Surnames A - F

loraine.chichester@tdsb.on.ca

Special Education:

Steven Maurer (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

steven.maurer@tdsb.on.ca

Student Success:

Paula Burgess (Assistant Curriculum Leader)

paula.burgess@tdsb.on.ca

Superintendent: Kurt McIntosh (LC2|LN11)

416-395-8808 • Kurt.McIntosh@tdsb.on.ca

Trustee: James Li • Ward 13

416-395-8787 • James.Li@tdsb.on.ca