

Vanier Community Newsletter – Week 1 (Sept 8, 2023)

Dear Vanier Family,

Welcome to the 2023-2024 school year! The summer has flown by quickly, but we hope you had the opportunity to rest, relax, and enjoy the relatively warm weather with your families and loved ones.

We know the last few years have been challenging for families and students, but as we begin a new school year, we want to reiterate the importance of prioritizing your mental health and wellness. Our amazing Student Services team, comprised of our Guidance Counsellors, Child and Youth Counsellor (CYC), Child and Youth Worker (CYW), and social worker, will continue to provide support to students and families.

This weekly newsletter will inform you about what's happening at Vanier, including important information related to our school's three pillars of Student Achievement, Well-Being, and Equity. It will also include community information/news and resources that you may find helpful.

Vanier is a great place to be! We are proud to be one the most diverse schools in the TDSB in terms of its programs. For example, we serve students with developmental disabilities (Our PEEL program), those with strong interests in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (our STEM+ program) and those who are new to Canada (LEAP and ESL programs). We are one of only two TDSB schools offering an aerospace SHSM. Our Staff is incredible, and STUDENT VOICE is at the centre of what we do.

You are also a big part of what makes Vanier great. We look forward to connecting with many of you this coming year at our numerous school events (e.g., parent council meetings, parent/caregiver–teacher interviews, arts night, and many more), but please know our doors are always open if you need to connect with us one-on-one. Here's to a GREAT year!

Karen Johnson

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

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



@GeorgesVanierSS

Vanier School Advisory Council (VSAC)

The first meeting of our School Advisory Council will be *held in-person* at the school on **Wednesday, October 4, 2023, at 6:30 pm**. All parents/caregivers are welcome and encouraged to attend. Parents/caregivers must be ELECTED to the School Council, however.

Parents/caregivers can nominate themselves or others for election to the School Advisory Council. The election of all council members will be held at the first official meeting of the year. You may access the nomination form by clicking [here](#).

Once all the members of council are elected, they will then elect/select the executive Members of Council which include 1-2 Co-Chair(s), 1-2 Vice-Chair(s), 1 Treasurer, and 1 Secretary. Please click [here](#) to learn more about the role and responsibilities of those serving on a school advisory council.

News from our Trustees' Office

Our school's Trustee is Mr. James Li (Ward 13). Please click [here](#) for his welcome back letter.

General Information & News

1. **Day Schedule:** Our regular school day starts at **9:00 a.m. and ends at 3:15 p.m.** EXCEPT on late start days, where classes begin at **10:00 a.m.** and end at 3:15 p.m. Late start dates will be on the 3rd and 4th Wednesdays of every month. Our daily schedules are included near the end of this newsletter.
2. **Student Activity:** Please note that a \$35.00 student activity fee (SAF) will be collected from each student within the first three weeks of the school year. This SAF fee pays for a Yearbook, Vanier Athletic Association, Student ID card, and Student Council activities. Parents/guardians/caregivers are encouraged to use School Cash Online to pay the student activity fee.

Please use this link, <https://tdsb.schoolcashonline.com/>, to register for Cash Online if you have not already done so.

If needed, financial assistance is available to offset the activity fee. You may contact the principal, karen.johnson@tdsb.on.ca to provide/obtain more information.

3. **Reporting an Absence:** TDSB is offering a more efficient way for parents and caregivers to report all student absences, late arrivals, or future absences by using the [School Messenger](#) app. You can also report by calling the school messenger portal at **1-833-250-2290**. All attendance being reported before 9:00 a.m. must be done using School Messenger. You no longer need to call the school directly.

4. **TDSB Connects App for Students.** The TDSB Connects app is available to all students through the [Google Play Store](#) and the [Apple App Store](#). The app contains school announcements and integrates with the school Google calendar and is an excellent way to make information available to students. Both these tools also link into the school's Brightspace Homepage. If possible, students are highly encouraged to download the APP on their devices.



5. **Student Login and Password**

Returning Students - Due to a technical issue, a large number of students may be experiencing difficulty logging into the TDSB Connects App or other services such as Brightspace or Google Workspace. If students are unable to access their TDSB account, please follow [these instructions](#).

New students - Students new to TDSB will have their password set to the Shared Secret Password. This is a combination of the last 4 digits of the student number, followed by 2 digits for your day of birth, and 2 digits for your month of birth, followed by "@Tdsb" (case sensitive and 13 characters in total).

The infographic below provides the formula to the Shared Secret Password.



6. **Student Device Program Reminders - Action Required**

The families of students in grade 9 who wish to participate in the Student Device Program this year **MUST** complete the [Device Program Agreement Form](#) they receive through Permission Click as part of the school year start-up package.. Participation is optional, and students/families who do not wish to participate should **opt-out**. Students are responsible for taking care of their chromebooks. If a chromebook (or its charger) is dropped/broken/lost **it will not be replaced**.

Deadline to **OPT-IN is Friday, September 15 at 4:00 PM**

7. **Start of Year Forms.** Parents, guardians, and students will be able to complete and submit these forms through Permission Click starting on Sept 6. An email will be sent directly from the TDSB prompting you to complete them. If you do not receive this email over the next two weeks, please contact our Main office.
8. **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.
9. **TDSB Disconnecting from work Policy.** Please be aware that, as outlined in this policy, TDSB staff will not be available to make or respond to any work-related communications (emails, telephone, texts, etc.) between 7 p.m. and 7 a.m. Monday to Thursday; after 6 p.m. on Friday; Saturday; Sunday; and on statutory holidays.



Achievement

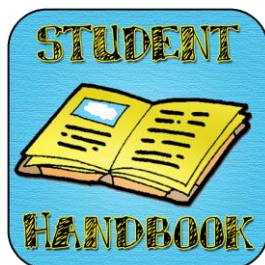
Course changes. Our Guidance team is still quite busy registering students and scheduling them into courses. We know that for various reasons (e.g., earning summer school credits), some students may need changes to their timetables. Students using their TDSB email accounts may request a timetable change using this [form](#). We will try and get through these requests as quickly as possible.



Course outlines. Course outlines will be distributed by September 18, 2023. The document indicates the course objectives, expectations of students, and the course evaluation structure. All courses include the triangulation of evidence of student achievement using Conversation, Observations, and Student Products.

Student Handbook. Students are asked to take time to review the Georges Vanier [Student Handbook](#) as soon as possible so they become aware of our school's policies and procedures.

Pay particular attention to the [GVSS Assessment & Evaluation Policy 2023](#) and our [Academic Eligibility Policy For Extracurricular Activities](#)



Equity

At Vanier, we will continue to work towards equitable outcomes for all our students by incorporating culturally relevant and responsive pedagogy into all courses. This involves getting to know the students we have in our classrooms and delivering material in a way that demonstrates students seeing themselves reflected through visual representation in the classroom, content of learning material, and students' voices. The links below take you to some equity resources and supports.

Equity, Anti-racism, Anti- Oppression

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Equity-Anti-Racism-and-Anti-Oppression>

Parents of Black Children Advocacy Group

www.Parentsofblackchildren.org

Special Education

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Leadership-Learning-and-School-Improvement/Special-Education>

Indigenous Education

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Community/Indigenous-Education>

Parent Concern Protocol

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/Contact-Us/Steps-to-Address-Questions-Concerns>

Health & Wellbeing

Breakfast Club: The Vanier School Nutrition program serves breakfast between 8:00 – 9:00 am in front of room 208 A each school day. Our students are welcome to grab breakfast before heading to their morning classes.

Mental Health Resources: Mental Health and Well-Being is essential to student success. The TDSB is committed to improving the mental health and well-being of students and has created an [action plan dedicated to achieving this goal](#).

[MHWB Resource for all grades](#)

[Parent-Caregiver Resources](#)

Back To School Resources:

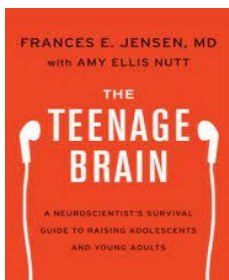
Students

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Innovation/Welcome-Back-Students>

Parents

<https://www.tdsb.on.ca/About-Us/Innovation/ForParents>

Great Article & Book



Article: Back-to-school anxiety: seven tips to help children cope
<https://theconversation.com/back-to-school-anxiety-seven-tips-to-help-children-cope-209936>

Book: The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist's Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents by Jensen, Frances E and Amy Ellis Nutt

Daily Schedules & Late Start Dates

Please click [here](#) to see our Daily Schedules & Late Start Dates

Some Useful Links

School Cash Online	SCO
EMA (Excursion Management Application)	EMA
TDSB Days of Significance 2023-2024	http://tdsbweb.tdsb.on.ca/system-calendar
TDSB Health and Safety	TDSB Health and Safety
Ontario Immunization Reporting	Report Student Immunizations
Volunteer Hours Form	Volunteer Hours Form
Vulnerable Sector Screening	https://www.tps.ca/services/background-checks/

Upcoming Dates & Events

September 12	Welcome back/Opening Assemblies (Assembly Day Schedule)
September 13	ACL Meeting
September 20	Late start, PLC
September 21	Photo Day
September 26	Gr. 9 Curriculum Night
September 27	Late start, Staff Meeting
September 30	National Day for Truth & Reconciliation/Orange Shirt Day

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

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

Loraine 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